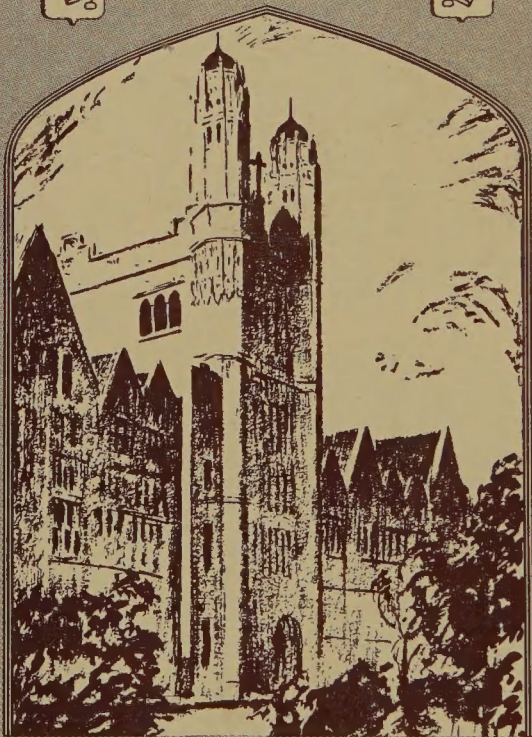




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# HISTORICAL RECORDS AND STUDIES

THOMAS F. MEEHAN

*Editor Society's Publications*

VOLUME XXVI



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# CATHOLIC HISTORICAL RECORDS AND STUDIES

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## ST. PETER'S SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

By T. J. REARDON

A general meeting of the United States Catholic Historical Society was held on the evening of November 19, 1935, at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, and because of the historical importance of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of St. Peter's parish, was arranged as an associate feature of the sesquicentennial celebration. The principal address of the evening was devoted entirely to a presentation of the highlights of the history of St. Peter's, the Mother Church of Catholic New York.

His Eminence Cardinal Hayes again honored St. Peter's parish and the United States Catholic Historical Society by presiding at the meeting as the Honorary President of the Society. A feature of the meeting, that came as a distinct surprise to nearly all present, occurred just as the meeting was about to start. Cardinal Hayes was escorted into the room by the president of the Historical Society, Percy J. King; the Rev. James E. Noonan, P.R., pastor of St. Peter's; the Hon. Alfred J. Talley, the guest speaker of the evening and the Very Rev. Monsignor John J. Casey, secretary to His Eminence. As the Cardinal stepped upon the platform, instead of taking the seat prepared for him he advanced to the speaker's stand and smilingly announced that, for the moment, he was going to usurp the duties and prerogatives of the active chairman to perform a duty that gave him a great deal of pleasure. He continued:

"I wish to say that in recognition of his exceptionally valuable and cultured services to the cause of Catholic historical study in this country, it is my very great pleasure, and I say it from my heart, to present to your president, Mr. King, the recognition of the Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, as expressed in this decoration of Knighthood in the Order of St. Gregory."

Mr. King knelt before the Cardinal to receive the decoration, which His Eminence fastened to the lapel of the recipient's coat.

"May I," continued His Eminence, "as the representative of the Church in New York, who knows personally of your exceptional work in the field of Catholic history, congratulate you, and express the hope that you will continue in your work, and enjoy this honor that the Holy Father has conferred upon you, for many, many years."

Mr. King expressed his thanks to the Cardinal Archbishop, and, through His Eminence, to the Holy Father, saying that he realized the honor was not so much a personal one as a recognition of the work of the Society of which he is president.

As the Cardinal entered he carried in his hand a specially bound copy in Cardinal red of the latest of the monograph series of the official publications of the United States Catholic Historical Society, which had just come from the press, a history of Old St. Peter's written by Leo Raymond Ryan, A.B., M.S., a member of the Society, with the title *Old St. Peter's, Mother Church of Catholic New York (1785-1935)*. This specially bound volume was presented to His Eminence on the day preceding the meeting by Thomas F. Meehan, K.S.G., editor of the Historical Society's publications. In the course of his informal address at the close of the meeting the Cardinal congratulated Mr. Ryan, the author, "for the fine work he has done." Since he received it from Mr. Meehan, His Eminence said, he had been looking through it and had become so interested in it that he "could hardly let it out of my hands."

President King then began the formal proceedings of the evening with this address:

Your Eminence, members and guests:

In the autumn of 1785, during the Indian Summer period, when New York is at its best, the cornerstone of St. Peter's in Barclay street was laid with fitting ceremonies. The United States Catholic Historical Society, recognizing the historical significance of the founding of the oldest Catholic church in New York one hundred and fifty years ago, has made this celebration the feature of its annual meeting.

St. Peter's is the pioneer ecclesiastical foundation of the Catholic

Faith in the city, and its sesquicentennial is of more than diocesan importance. The history of St. Peter's in the first few years of the nineteenth century is the history of the Church in New York. The initial struggles and final success of the early New York Catholics make an impressive record of loyalty, generosity and fidelity amid physical and spiritual hardships. And, although told before as part of the general story of the Faith in this city, the history of St. Peter's rates a volume of its own that would set forth what might be called the family life of the congregation, the trustees and their meetings, the marriages and baptisms, and all the traditions that develop during a century and a half about an edifice of such ripened years. A volume that would give more fully the life of those valiant decades and recall the intimate homely touch of men and things that makes history so fascinating. So our Society, under the guidance of our editor, Thomas F. Meehan, has published a history of St. Peter's in Barclay street, very ably written by a member, Leo R. Ryan, after long research and verification.

The little tree lined city of some 29,000 people which saw this new church abuilding had but a few years before been the scene of war and devastating fires which had destroyed some of the finest parts of the town, and was struggling to recoup its losses and regain its trade. The country was still functioning under the old Articles of Confederation, established to conduct the Revolutionary War and to hold the young community together. It was a loose union in which the States retained most of their sovereignty, making the national government impotent and unable to properly levy taxes and enforce its laws. There was no Congress or Cabinet as we know them, but there was a President of Congress, and Secretaries of War and Foreign Affairs, the other members of the Cabinet holding titles reminiscent of war times such as Paymaster General, Quartermaster General and Auditor General. It was not until St. Peter's had been erected for some years that the present Constitution was adopted and Washington was inaugurated as President, with those colorful ceremonies that marked the occasion. The far East Side of the city was still quite rural with country seats and small truck farms in the vicinity of Rutgers and Orchard Streets, and of course

above the Common and through the extensive Lispenard Meadows, and eastward above Grand Street fish and small game abounded.

This was the city in which was built the Church of St. Peter, a city where foreign monies with strange names circulated freely, and guineas, Johannes (commonly called Joes), Carolines, pistoles, doubloons, chequins, moidores and crowns passed every day from hand to hand, and Dutch, French, Spanish and Portuguese sailors were seen in every river street, a city where the ideals of liberty were passionately defended and slaves and redemptioners, some as young as fourteen years, were sold at public auction; a city that was to see later an increase in Catholic churches and population such as these founders could not possibly have envisioned.

There are now a number of congregations in New York which have reached or soon will reach their hundredth year, and it might be worth while for each of them to compile a little history of the parish that will in time become a really valuable part of the great mosaic of the Church's history in New York. Now is the time when such work should be done, when the children and the grandchildren of the first parishioners of these churches can yet give testimony of the acts, deeds and personalities their parents and grandparents knew and talked about so familiarly. Because with the passing of this generation the mental records fresh with the accuracy of a living memory will have faded into a blurred outline.

The stories of the past that interest us most, I believe, are not the grand formal accounts of a statistical expert but the simple human outpourings found in letters and diaries and recollections in age of deeds in youth, the story of the average man who knew and shared his neighbors' daily lives, the soldiers in the ranks, not the commanders, the men who cleared the wilderness, not the governor who ruled them. The tendency of modern historical works is not to stress the great military leaders, their conquests and power, but rather to know what the volunteer or conscript did and suffered. Surely we get a better and clearer view of a nation's past by learning of its folk customs, its pilgrimages and its feast days than by reading of court balls and political intrigues.

True, they have their place in the general pattern of a nation's life, but the diary of a Continental soldier and Nathan Hale's story



are much more colorful and, I think, show more intimately and truly the life of the times than those diplomatic exchanges between the American and British armies and the French Ambassador. Most of us remember our dreary history courses at school and how we learned of some worthy General leading 200,000 men in battle and losing 50,000 in two days, but we knew very little of the ambitions, deceits and greedy aspirations that lead to these conflicts.

Now writers of history, with no predilection for grandeur, look on all sides of the picture and the story of Corporal Roberts, his reactions, his sufferings, his victory or death receive their due share in the general plan. The story of Pierre Toussaint, the Negro slave who accompanied his master to New York and who so tenderly cared for his master's widow during her life, though freed, and became a model Catholic, respected by all, white and colored, is an example. Read the account of his life in the twenty-fifth volume of the RECORDS AND STUDIES of our Society and see how the tale of this colored hairdresser of early New York is as interesting as any story of our merchant princes of the olden days.

Our Society celebrated its golden jubilee last year, having been founded in 1884, so that we are now in the fifty-first year of our existence. During this period of time we have issued twenty-five volumes of the society's publications known as the RECORDS AND STUDIES, and sixteen volumes of the Monograph Series, the latter containing but one topic of some length, the former a number of shorter papers, an account of the annual meeting and the address of the speaker of the evening. In the Monograph Series there have been some notable works, among them *The Church in Virginia 1815-1832*, by Monsignor Guilday; *The Life of Bishop David*, by Sister Columba Fox; *Doctrina Breve*, a facsimile copy of the oldest book published in North America, printed in Mexico in 1544; Dr. Foik's *Pioneer Catholic Journalism*; the Rev. Dr. O'Daniel's *Dominicans in Early Florida*; the *Pioneer German Catholics in the Colonies*, by the Rev. Lawrence Schrott, O.S.B.; Lord Charles Russell's *Diary of a Visit to the United States*; the *Unpublished Letters of Charles Carroll of Carrollton*.

Interesting sketches of men and things may be found in the

volumes of the RECORDS AND STUDIES, from the authoritative and facile pen of our own Thomas F. Meehan, editor of the Society's publications, and his widespread circle of contributors, including those vignettes of old New York life for which these editions are noted.

The United States Catholic Historical Society was fortunate in having a distinguished body of men as founders and in the devoted work of the executive officers, especially that dean of Catholic historians, our esteemed editor-in-chief, Mr. Meehan, still capably functioning as he has for years past. Among the men who have held the office as president before me were such well-known New Yorkers as John Gilmary Shea, Richard H. Clarke, Charles G. Herbermann, Stephen Farrelly and Dr. John G. Coyle. The Society's membership is international in character, and libraries throughout the world, including the Vatican, contain full sets of our publications.

We have, I think, done well; we hope to do better work in the future with the generous cooperation of our friends. But the work would not have been so fruitful, nor the prestige of the organization as high, but for the very cordial and intelligent interest taken in our work by our honorary president, His Eminence, our beloved Cardinal, who in many ways has manifested his concern for our success and encouraged us in our labors. He has never failed to attend our annual meetings and assist us in our efforts, thus signally showing his approval, and we wish again for the Society and its officers to thank him most sincerely, knowing the multitudinous calls upon him and his time and his onerous duties.

This must be a peculiarly happy time for Father Noonan, whom I have known since we were schoolboys together in the New York of yesterday, and with a friendship that has remained unbroken in the long intervening years. I knew him as a classmate, a college companion, and then after his return from the seminary as a young curate with Monsignor McGean, the cultured pastor of St. Peter's. And later I visited him at his country rectory at Tuxedo, where his energetic missionary zeal provided a new church at Sloatsburg some miles below his parish.

His return to the charge of Old St. Peter's in Barclay Street,

came after the death of Monsignor McGean. The fatherly care he has given this ancient monument of the Faith has preserved for us this historical foundation of Catholicism in New York City. He sees it now in the glory of its years, the center of this celebration, brought to fruition by his devoted efforts. Father Noonan is the corresponding secretary of the United States Catholic Historical Society and his presentation to our board of this opportunity to make our own this splendid commemoration of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of St. Peter's brought an instant and enthusiastic approval that led to our meeting here tonight.

I want to congratulate the Rev. James E. Noonan on his pastorate and his affectionate care of Old St. Peter's in Barclay Street, on the historic interest he has displayed in this ancient home of our family of the Faith, now standing amid the cathedrals of commerce and homes of industry, but which still draws to its quiet throngs of worshipers.

The story of St. Peter's will be brilliantly told by the Hon. Alfred J. Talley, the speaker of the evening, whose career has been an inspiration to all of us, and it gives me much pleasure to have the great privilege to present to you the well-known civic leader and eminent Catholic, my old and valued friend, Judge Talley.

Mr. Talley said:

Rome, Immortal Rome, is the city of churches and also a city of inscriptions. The latter abound everywhere, on temple, basilica, column and arch, inscriptions on everything. But there is none more inspiring, more expressive of justifiable pride than the one which adorns the façade of the glorious St. John Lateran, which says: "This Sacred Church of the Lateran is the Mother and head of all the Churches of the City and the World." And indeed it is. It is the Church of the Bishop of Rome. The Chapter of the Lateran takes precedence over that of St. Peter. In other days to its throne all newly elected Popes came for their coronation. On the front of its Papal throne are engraved the words: "This is the true pontifical throne." As you are all aware, the reason for its boast is the fact that as far back as 312 of the Christian era, the site was given to Pope Melchiades by the Emperor Constantine, who first lifted the Christians out of the hidden galleries and vaults of the catacombs and bade them come forth into God's

sunlight for the practise of their religion. Amid many vicissitudes and three disasters from fire and earthquake, it has survived the centuries and stands today "Omnium urbis et orbis Ecclesiarum Mater et Caput."

There is no inscription over the classic columns of St. Peter's in Barclay Street, New York, but if some reverent sculptor were commissioned to carve out a proper legend he could in truth and justice inscribe words which would proclaim that the Church, whose one hundred and fiftieth anniversary we commemorate tonight, is the head and the Mother-Church of the City and State of New York and of the great metropolitan district which extends far beyond the limits of the State.

In 1785, the year which saw its beginnings, the City of New York was the capital of the new-born American Republic. Within its present parish limits a statue marks the place upon which Washington stood to take his oath of office as our first President in the year 1789.

Prior to the evacuation of New York by the British in 1783, Catholics were proscribed and hunted like beasts. Remember, that during the entire period of the Revolutionary War, New York was occupied by the British. The bitterness and intolerance against the Catholics which had developed to its greatest fury in England after the expulsion of James II and the accession of William of Orange, reached across the seas and extended to the American Colonies. The first Legislative Assembly under British rule in New York had been convened by a Catholic Governor, Thomas Dongan, whose memory is today perpetuated in bronze upon the walls of St. Peter's Church, and its very first act was the "Charter of Liberty," giving complete freedom of religion to the people of New York. This was in 1683. This great and enlightened legislation was wiped out, without warrant of law, by a mere Resolution in the Assembly in 1691, which declared all laws passed by the preceding Assembly to be null and void, and, in place of the Dongan "Charter of Liberties," they passed a "Bill of Rights," which contained a clause expressly excluding Catholics from participating in its privileges. The language was as follows: "Provided always that nothing herein mentioned or contained shall extend to give liberty for any persons of the Romist religion to



exercise their manner of worship contrary to the laws and statutes of their Majesties' Kingdom of England." In 1700, another law was enacted wherein it was provided that any Catholic priest coming into the Province of New York should be "deemed and accounted an incendiary, and disturber of the public peace and safety, and an enemy to the true Christian religion and shall be adjudged to suffer perpetual imprisonment." In case of escape and capture, the penalty was death. To harbor a priest was made a crime. This condition prevailed right up to the breaking out of the American Revolution in 1776. Such Catholics as may have been in the Colony had neither priests nor Mass nor church.

In 1778, only seven years before the event which we here celebrate, a French ship was captured by the British near the Chesapeake, and sent to New York. Her chaplain was a French Augustinian. He applied to the British authorities for permission to say Mass. He misunderstood the refusal with which his request was met, and did celebrate Mass. He was arrested and held a prisoner for months until exchanged.

The attitude of the English toward the Catholic Church throughout the war in New York was, therefore, one of continuing hostility and oppression.

In 1783 the British rule ended with the departure of the English troops. A new Republic came into being, and the pitifully few Catholics that were in New York came forth from their catacombs and began, under the aegis of the new found liberty, to assemble openly for the practise of their religion.

Their first priest was the venerable Father Ferdinand Farmer, whose real name was Steinmeyer, a German-born Jesuit, who came occasionally from Philadelphia to minister to the Catholics of New York. Mass was celebrated in any large room that could be obtained for the purpose. Tradition says that services were frequently held in a carpenter's shop near Barclay Street. Sometimes they had Mass in the residence of the Spanish Consul and the Spanish Ambassador, then a resident in New York, which was at that time the capital of the nation. Mass was also celebrated in the famous Vauxhall Gardens which ran along the North River from Warren to Chambers Streets. Several of the foreign Min-



isters accredited to the United States were Catholics who brought with them their Catholic chaplains.

The first resident pastor of the Catholics was an Irish Capuchin, Father Charles Whelan. Because of the Irish penal laws most of his ministry was spent in France which was the headquarters of the Irish Capuchins. In 1780 he came to this country as a chaplain in the French Navy and joined the fleet of Admiral De Grasse which played such an important part in the significant victory of the American forces at Yorktown. After Yorktown, however, De Grasse's fleet was defeated by the British in the West Indies and Father Whelan was brought to Jamaica as a prisoner of war. For thirteen months he remained on the Island ministering the Sacraments to 3,562 Frenchmen, 800 Spaniards and thirty-five Americans. He was then paroled and arrived in New York in October, 1784. He described the Catholics in New York as he found them, as very poor, but very zealous and for the most part Irish. They were not able to build a chapel nor even buy a place for saying Mass, but he says, a Portuguese gentleman allowed them part of his house for that purpose. The gentleman referred to was Jose Roiz Silva, a Catholic New York merchant.

John Carroll, later to become the distinguished Archbishop of Baltimore, had been appointed Prefect Apostolic for the Church in America. Father Farmer, who was acting as Vicar General, wrote to Father Carroll advising him of the arrival in New York of Father Whelan and asking if proper faculties could be granted to him. Father Carroll was under strict instructions not to grant faculties to any priest coming to America without the express approval of the Congregation of the Propaganda in Rome. Father Whelan wrote to the Papal Nuncio of Paris requesting the approval of the Sacred Congregation. Part of his letter recites the necessary qualifications for a New York pastor of those days. He said: "It is necessary for a priest in this place to know at least Irish, English, French and Dutch since our congregation is composed of people of these nationalities as also Portuguese and Spaniards."

It is recorded that the number of Catholics in New York at the time that letter was written was 200, although the actual communicants were only about twenty. The faculties were finally

granted. The energetic Capuchin was established as a priest in good standing. He had his authority to function, he had his meagre congregation, but no church in which to officiate.

On February 3, 1785, twenty-two Catholics made a written appeal to Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, the French Consul for the States of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. They besought him to try to obtain from the city authorities a suitable site upon which to construct a church, being, as they said, "encouraged in this by the happy tolerance accorded by the new constitution of this State and the privilege of professing publicly our religion here."

On March 4, 1785, the French Consul presented the request to the Common Council of the city. The reply came not from the city but from the Trinity Church Corporation to whom the request had been referred by the Mayor. The Trinity Corporation stated that they had three lots, comprising a plot 75 by 100, forming the corner of Church and Barclay Streets which were available as leaseholds.

While negotiations were pending, however, the Catholics felt the need of a temporary home, and the French Consul again, at their request, went forward with another petition to the City Fathers. There was an unoccupied building owned by the City on Broad Street known as the Exchange Building, and they asked permission to use it. On April 30, 1785, a meeting of the Common Council presided over by Mayor Duane refused the request basing their refusal upon their solicitude for their Catholic fellow-citizens in that, as they said, they regarded the structure as unsafe and incapable of sustaining any great weight.

At that time, the building was unoccupied, but during the entire year preceding it had been used as a school for military instruction and for years afterward was used as a polling-place and as a meeting-place for not only the Law Society but for the Tammany Society as well. However, the refusal had the advantage of spurring on the angered Catholics to greater energy. They organized a church corporation under the Laws of 1784. They elected as their first trustees their friend the French Consul, the Portuguese merchant, Jose Roiz Silva, James Stewart and Henry Duffin. The law gave the trustees of a church corporation complete control

over the finances of the church and the renting of pews. This was the beginning of the trustee system which was later to result in great scandal, abuse and confusion and which was not ended until Archbishop John Hughes dealt it a mighty and final blow some sixty years later. This first Catholic church corporation was designated on June 10, 1785, as "The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church in the City of New York." The new trustees announced the acquisition of an unexpired term of sixty-three years on the lots known as Trinity Church Farm at Barclay Street and invited subscriptions. The list was headed by the four trustees, the Dutch Ambassador Van Berkell, Governor George Clinton and Mayor Duane. Five lots were acquired from Trinity, and on October 5, 1785, the cornerstone of the church named after the Prince of the Apostles was laid and New York's first Catholic church came into being—the St. John Lateran of the Archdiocese of New York.

If we Catholics of today draw back, as we sometimes are prone to do, from rendering assistance to the Church in lands other than our own, it might not be amiss to turn back the pages of the history of our own church in New York lest we become ungrateful and unmindful of what Catholics in other lands have done in days gone by for us. One of the leaders in the new congregation was a striking figure in early New York history—a leading merchant named Dominick Lynch. He forwarded an appeal to one Warden Kirwan of Galway for financial aid from the Catholics of that town and county. Appeals were addressed to the Kings of France and Spain. The latter responded more generously than the former and instructed the Spanish minister, Don Diego de Gardoqui, to contribute a thousand dollars—a vast sum in those days. It was this same Gardoqui who, curiously enough, had presided at the laying of the cornerstone. No mention is made of any ecclesiastical function having been had nor of the traditional church ceremony for such an occasion having been carried out. There is no mention even of a priest or prelate being present on that eventful day. When, to the great joy of the Catholics of New York, the new church was ready for services, the opening was set for November 4, 1786, the feast of St. Charles Borromeo, which was the "Saint's Day" of His Majesty of Spain. Gardoqui

was given the place of honor in the congregation and, after the Mass, gave a banquet in honor of the occasion at which the most distinguished personages of the time were present. It was a notable and happy day for the Catholic laity, but a time of great concern and difficulty for those in charge of the spiritual affairs of the new enterprise.

Let us remember that the organization of the Church in New York in 1785 was somewhat indefinite. The United States had yet to have its first Bishop. The highest ranking authority was John Carroll, the Prefect Apostolic, located in Philadelphia then several days journey by coach from New York. In line with the custom of the Protestant churches then in New York, the Catholics were prone to judge the capabilities of their priest primarily by his ability as a pulpit orator. What they wanted was a "thundering preacher" and apparently the first pastor, Father Whelan, was a disappointment in that regard; so much so, that there is no record of his even being present at the laying of the cornerstone despite the work he had done in collecting the funds necessary to make the building possible. It is recorded that, although an Irishman, he had spent so much of his life in France that he spoke indifferently English. He apparently did not measure up to the standard of sacred oratory set by his congregation and there was much dissatisfaction among the people.

Into this strained situation came in this same year of 1785 another Irish Capuchin, Andrew Nugent, an experienced and eloquent preacher. He was authorized, after some negotiation with Dr. Carroll, to assist Father Whelan. Within a few weeks he brought about dissension among the all-powerful and self-important trustees of the new church. Some demanded that Father Whelan give over his authority to Father Nugent. It was proposed, as a compromise, by Father Farmer, as Vicar General, and Dr. Carroll that, for the time being, Father Whelan attend to the parish functions and that the eloquent Father Nugent do the preaching, but this plan did not work out. Finally the trustees demanded the removal of Father Whelan and threatened to take the matter to court, assuming that, as trustees, they had the right to select and dismiss their own clergymen, irrespective of ecclesiastical sanction and even against the will of the Church authorities. The situation



became very acute and critical, considering that this was the very first introduction of Catholic worship in the City of New York. Dr. Carroll warned the trustees that if legal action were attempted they would be without a priest because he would withhold faculties from any priest who would encourage or be a party to such procedure.

The upshot of the matter was that Father Whelan, undoubtedly a zealous priest but a somewhat difficult man, gave up and repaired to a place above Albany, and Dr. Carroll, somewhat reluctantly, as it appears, granted temporary faculties to Father Nugent and installed him as temporary pastor. But he went along smoothly for a few months only, when the trustees became displeased with him and told him he was at liberty to depart.

These unpleasant and harassing matters on the spiritual side did not, however, stop the material work of the building of the structure, and the church was opened for services amidst great rejoicing on November 4, 1786, the first Mass being celebrated by Father Nugent. The joy of this signal event did not, however, end the dissension in the congregation. Eight months later, in July, 1787, the same trustees who had caused the removal of Father Whelan demanded the withdrawal of Father Nugent, and the situation became so acute that Dr. Carroll was compelled to come to New York and, after investigation, finally withdrew the approval and faculties previously given to Father Nugent and this time selected a Dominican, Father William O'Brien, who had spent sixteen years in the Archdiocese of Dublin. The appointment was violently opposed by Father Nugent, who refused to yield. Many of the distraught congregation sided with him and a real schism seemed imminent. The trustees even commenced legal action to dislodge Father Nugent, and were successful.

The last chapter of this troublesome period is written in the records of St. Peter's, wherein it appears that eight of the trustees, headed by Dominick Lynch, actuated, as they said, "by pure motives of benevolence," and considering his "present distressed situation," subscribed seventeen pounds to send Father Nugent back to France on board the packet *Telemaque*.

This, however, was not the entire expense incurred by reason of the Father Nugent episode. We find a record in the minutes



of the trustees of August 3, 1789, that a committee of three was appointed to call upon one Richard Harrison, a lawyer, respecting his bill against the church for £199, 3s, 8d, for services rendered in various suits-at-law between the trustees and the Rev. Andrew Nugent and his adherents. The condition of the treasury is indicated by the fact that the committee was instructed to inform Mr. Harrison that they were appointed to offer him a bond, payable in three years, with five per cent interest. Just how warmly the committee was received by the lawyer, history does not record.

Father Nugent died in France in 1795, at the age of fifty-five years.

Thus we can say that the Church in New York had its beginnings in strife and confusion and that St. Peter's bark started upon its fruitful journey on a troubled and tempestuous sea.

Father O'Brien's pastorate began in November, 1787. About that time the corporate name was changed to "The Trustees for the Roman Catholic Congregation of St. Peter's Church in the City of New York." The population of the City of New York is in this year of 1935 reckoned at some seven million. It is likewise reckoned that in the present City of New York there are about 2,000,000 Catholics. In 1787 the population of the city was 25,000. The Catholics numbered 400. In three of the early volumes of the *RECORDS AND STUDIES* of this Catholic Historical Society appear the early entries of the Baptismal Registration of St. Peter's which tell how cosmopolitan was this small group of Catholics. Irish names are most numerous, then came the French, German, Italian, Spanish and English.

The building of the church placed a terrific financial burden upon the congregation. Appeals were made to the Governments of Spain, France, South America and Cuba. At the request of the trustees Father O'Brien made a journey to Mexico to solicit funds. It happened that the then Archbishop of Mexico, Don Alonzo Nunes de Haro, had been a classmate of Father O'Brien's at Bologna, Italy, and welcomed his old friend with open arms.

In these terrible days of unspeakable persecution of the Church in Mexico it is well for us in New York to know that the records of St. Peter's show that in Mexico Father O'Brien collected \$4,920 and received one donation from the Bishop of Puebla de

los Angeles of \$1,000, with which funds the pews and pulpit were installed, the tower erected and the portico built. Although the church of today is completely rebuilt and transformed one perpetual reminder of Mexico remains. The splendid Crucifixion which surmounts the main altar was one of the paintings brought from Mexico by Father O'Brien and is the work of a celebrated Mexican artist, Jose Maria Vallejo. Mother Seton speaks of the joy of her reception into the Catholic Faith as she knelt before the "small tabernacle and the great Crucifixion."

Father O'Brien was a zealous, tactful and capable priest. During the frightful visitations of yellow fever in 1795, 1798 and 1799, and again in 1801 and 1805 he was one of the heroes of the plague ridden city. In 1798 alone, 3,000 died of the pestilence, 100 of whom were in St. Peter's small congregation. Father O'Brien lived to be seventy-five years old and died in 1816 and was buried in the churchyard which formerly adjoined the church. The monument erected over his grave was transferred to the church and is affixed to the wall in the basement chapel of the present church.

In 1805 he received into the Church, Elizabeth Bayley Seton, the sainted founder of the Sisters of Charity in the United States, whose conversion was one of the sensations of the day. Her story is familiar to all but no history of St. Peter's would be adequate without more than passing reference to it.

We commence with the part that St. Peter's played in the life of this New York woman who loved her city, although it treated her cruelly, and whom the Church one day will, it is devoutly hoped, place in the calendar of saints. She was what we would call a society woman. Her father, Dr. Richard Bayley, probably the best known physician of his day, was the first Health Officer of the Port of New York and the first Professor of Anatomy at Columbia University. Her mother was Catherine Charlton who was the daughter of the rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on Staten Island. She died when Elizabeth was only three years old. Dr. Bayley then married Charlotte Barclay, a daughter of Andrew and Helen Roosevelt Barclay. Charlotte Barclay is described by Mother Seton as "a woman of rare and sweet attainments." One of the children of this second marriage was Guy

Carleton Bayley. A son of the latter was James Roosevelt Bayley who entered the Church in 1842, became the first Bishop of Newark and later the eighth Archbishop of Baltimore. Elizabeth Bayley at the age of nineteen became engaged to William Magee Seton, the son of a well-to-do-merchant and a man of standing and culture. Their marriage was a brilliant social event solemnized by the Episcopal Bishop of New York. Their home was in the center of the fashionable society of the day at the Battery. To be precise it was at No. 7 State Street in a house which for many years past has been used as the Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary for the Protection of Irish Immigrant Girls. Their union was blessed with five children, two boys and three girls. The war between England and France brought about a serious depression in New York as a shipping port and the Seton firm was threatened with financial failure.

Worry undermined Seton's health, and in the hope of recovering it, Elizabeth and her husband sailed for Italy in 1803. A few weeks after his arrival he died and was buried in Leghorn. While in Florence under the protection of her friends the Filicchi family her thoughts began to turn to Catholicism. Four months later she returned to America. Her father was dead, her husband gone, their fortune wiped out. She and her children were dependent upon the Seton family. They would not countenance any leanings toward Catholicism. She knew that if she became a Catholic she and her children would be ostracized not only by her family but by all her friends. The Anglican rector of St. Paul's Church labored assiduously to prevent her taking the step and almost succeeded. He was the Rev. Henry Hobart, who later became the Episcopal Bishop of New York. His daughter married the Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina. In 1842 with her husband she entered the Catholic Church. Elizabeth Seton became a Catholic at the rail of St. Peter's and was received into the Faith by the Rev. Matthew O'Brien. She speaks of the happiness that was hers, kneeling "before the little tabernacle and the great Crucifixion." The little tabernacle has been replaced, but the glow of the sanctuary lamp, as we speak, is casting shadows upon the same Crucifixion which we never gaze upon without a feeling that Mother Seton is somewhere there looking upon it too. Her

friends deserted her. A little school which she opened near St. Mark's church and the Bowery was a failure due to the anti-Catholic spirit which spent its full force upon this valiant, harassed woman.

The girl that had been reared in luxury was dependent upon her Italian friends, the Fillichi brothers, for enough to keep her little family from actual pauperism. They were giving her an allowance of \$50 a month for herself and five young children. Then something happened. In St. Peter's Church she met in the sacristy one day in August, 1807, a visiting priest who had come to say Mass there. He was the Superior of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore. He informed her that there was need of a Catholic Girls School in that city and offered to assist her if she went there. The proposal came to Elizabeth Seton as a ray from heaven. Arrangements were made to place her two sons at Georgetown College, and in June, 1808, with her three daughters she set sail on the packet *Grand Sachem*, leaving behind her native and beloved New York for Baltimore.

Today we sail from New York and arrive in England and France in four and a half days. Elizabeth Seton's journey to Baltimore took just seven days. Her trials and progress there furnish very tempting matter for a narrator, but there we must leave her beginning almost imperceptibly the foundation of the American Sisters of Charity, which today in New York as a Community have become, may I say it, "The Cardinal's Own," the diocesan Congregation whose daughters now occupy ninety branch convents besides the mother house at beautiful Mount St. Vincent-on-the-Hudson. Most of them are in the Archdiocese of New York; some are in Brooklyn, Albany, Harrisburg and the Bahama Islands. They have ninety-three educational institutions, including elementary, high schools, academies and a college. They conduct seven hospitals, a retreat for mental sufferers, three convalescent homes, a foundling asylum and homes for dependent children and for the aged. When she began in New York not enough children came to her school near the Bowery to permit it to carry on. Today her Community has the care of some fifty thousand. Elizabeth Bayley Seton never despaired so long as she could kneel before a "little tabernacle or a great Crucifixion."



One word more. What became of her five children? Her eldest daughter, Amina, died in 1812 shortly after having been professed as a Sister of Charity. Two years later her youngest girl Rebecca died as a novice in the same Community. These two died during Mother Seton's lifetime. The third daughter, Catherine, became a Sister of Mercy and died in New York in 1891. Her son Richard became an officer in the United States Navy and died at sea in 1823. Her son William became a banker with the Filicchi's firm in Leghorn, Italy. One of his sons was Archbishop Robert Seton, who died at Convent Station, N. J., in 1927.

In Mother Seton's time in New York there was no Bishop. The only diocese was Baltimore. Dr. Carroll was created Bishop in 1789 but New York had no Bishop until 1808. In April of that year New York having become entitled to its own Bishop the Reverend Luke Concannon, a Dominican, was named and consecrated in Rome. He was a man of learning and experience. He was made the bearer of the Pallium for Archbishop Carroll. He left Rome, but after waiting at Leghorn, Italy, for four months for a ship to carry him to New York, returned in despair to Rome. Napoleon was then striding Europe, and England and France were at war. He then went to Naples hoping to embark from there, but the French being then in control of that city detained him as a British subject and there he died suddenly and New York never saw its first Bishop.

Father Anthony Kohlmann, a Jesuit, had arrived in New York in the preceding year. He was named as administrator and conducted the affairs of the diocese until 1814. He was designated as rector of St. Peter's in 1808 and was assisted by another famous Jesuit, Benedict J. Fenwick, later to be Bishop of Boston. Father Kohlmann was a native of Alsace. He had first been a Capuchin, then a member of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart, and later a Jesuit. He was a man of great culture. He had studied at Freiburg, Switzerland, and labored in Italy, Austria, Germany and Holland. He fitted into the rectorship of St. Peter's because the Germans in New York had appealed to Archbishop Carroll for a German priest and a place of worship of their own. Upon Father Kohlmann's arrival, instead of one sermon a day in English, sermons were given every Sunday in English, French and German.



So rapid was the growth of the city that the congregation now was estimated at 14,000 out of a population of 60,000. The old City Hall at Broad and Nassau Streets had given way to a new one, which was being built where the present City Hall now stands. You will recall that the City Hall faces south. All of the city proper at this time lay to the north. The trustees of St. Peter's saw that a new church was imperative and determined to build a Cathedral for their city. The site at Mott Street was chosen because it was at the extreme eastern end of the city's development and because the trustees already owned nineteen lots there which had been purchased in part in 1801 to be used as a Catholic burying ground. There the cornerstone of Old St. Patrick's Cathedral was laid with Father Kohlmann officiating in 1809 at a time of fierce financial depression and panic in the city. A more difficult time could not have been selected.

It is worthy of passing comment that the present Cathedral, our entrancing gem of Gothic architecture, was likewise built upon ground originally intended for a graveyard. It had been purchased in 1810 by Father Kohlmann for \$11,000. A dwelling upon it was occupied by the Jesuits as their school, known as the New York Literary Institution, which had originally been located opposite the old Cathedral in Mott Street. It was compelled to close in 1813 and was then occupied by the Trappists as an orphan asylum. This Literary Institution represented the first attempt at a Catholic college in New York. In January, 1813, it had seventy-four boarding students, among whom were the sons of former Governor Livingston and the then Governor Tompkins of the State of New York. It gave great promise of being one of the notable institutions of classical learning in the country, but at this juncture a Jesuit Superior did one of those unaccountable things; he ordered it closed down and the faculty moved to Georgetown. It was asserted that there was a lack of available members of the Society to man the institution and it was a question of keeping up Georgetown or the New York establishment, and the latter was unfortunately sacrificed.

History repeats itself. Just one hundred years later the same reason was given for the closing of the College of St. Francis Xavier in West Sixteenth Street, established in 1850 as the legiti-

mate successor to the old Literary Institution. This time it was a question between Fordham and St. Francis Xavier's, and the latter was sacrificed without benefit to Fordham and to the great loss of the City of New York and the Church.

After the Literary Institution was closed in 1813 the place remained idle. In 1828 the trustees of St. Peter's and the trustees of the newly established St. Patrick's met and made a colossal but glorious blunder for which New York Catholics should be profoundly grateful. They determined to acquire the site for a new burying ground. An inspection and examination would have revealed that a stratum of solid rock was hardly adapted for interment purposes, but the examination was never made, and happily the site was acquired. It was not until thirty years after that Archbishop Hughes designated it as the site for the present Cathedral against many violent protests that it was too far in the country for New Yorkers to attend.

There is a law upon the statute books in New York State which makes certain communications made to the lawyer, the doctor and the priest privileged. That means that members of those professions cannot be compelled by any authority to disclose any communications made to them under the seal of a professional relation. That tremendously important and enlightened legislation had its origin in the rectory of St. Peter's church. In March, 1813, a man named Keating caused the arrest of one Phillips and his wife on a charge of receiving stolen goods. Before the case came on for trial complete restitution had been made and, as is quite common, the ardor of Mr. Keating to aid the prosecution cooled. This attitude was resented by the police and District Attorney and Keating was threatened with prosecution unless he revealed the identity of the person from whom he had received the stolen property.

The pressure becoming strong Keating disclosed that it had come from the pastor of his church, Father Kohlmann. That seemed to make it easy and Father Kohlmann was summoned forthwith. He very simply explained that he could disclose nothing because the knowledge of the thieves had come to him through the confessional. He was then brought before the Grand Jury with the same result. Then the trial of Phillips and his wife came

on and again he was called, and in open court he respectfully and firmly refused to answer. Explaining fully, however, the doctrines of the Church and his reasons for declining to give any information. The point, strange as it seems now, appeared to be a new one in American jurisprudence, although it had arisen long before in the English courts. By consent the case was adjourned so that the court could have ample time to consider this matter. Then the bigotry and anti-Catholicism of the day broke forth, and the case became a "cause celebre." So much rancor was manifest that the District Attorney was quite content to recommend that the case be dropped. Then our old friends, the trustees of St. Peter's, came into the picture by demanding that the question be settled once and for all. They passed a resolution demanding that the District Attorney go forward with the trial at the next term of court. The matter was argued before the Court of General Sessions in June, 1813. DeWitt Clinton, then Mayor, presided. In those days the court was composed of the Mayor, the Recorder and a member of the Board of Aldermen. Eventually all the judicial functions of the court devolved upon the Recorder. The decision of the court, rendered on June 14, 1813, upholding the seal of the confessional, loosed another flood of anti-Catholic invective. Just fifteen years later, DeWitt Clinton was Governor of the State, and it was he who signed the bill making professional communications inviolable.

New York's first Bishop died in 1810. It was not until November, 1815, that New York had its second Bishop in the person of John Connolly, like his predecessor, a Dominican. In the same year, Father Kohlmann was recalled by his superiors to become a master of novices in Maryland. His assistant, Father Fenwick, then took charge of St. Peter's. He remained as pastor until April, 1817, when he was withdrawn to become president of Georgetown College. That year marked the withdrawal of the Jesuits from St. Peter's, which for eight years they had administered with signal success. They did not return to New York until 1845, when they took charge of St. John's College, now Fordham University.

It is a far cry from the crude early pavements of Barclay Street to the green mountains of Vermont. But thither do we go to

contemplate the person of a young and most attractive belle of that rugged State, one Fanny Allen. She had the distinction of being the daughter of the redoubtable General Ethan Allen, of Fort Ticonderoga fame, whose demand for the surrender of the fort "in the Name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress" was one of our earliest thrills in the reading of American history. Ethan Allen was an avowed atheist, and yet his daughter Fanny became a Catholic and a nun.

Time does not permit the telling here of her most interesting story. She was baptized against her will at the insistence of her mother and stepfather, just before she obtained permission to go to Montreal ostensibly to study French. The baptism was apparently regarded as a sure safeguard against the machinations of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Montreal, whose school she attended. It was performed by the Rev. Daniel Barber, an Episcopal clergyman. While at the convent school Fanny became a Catholic and informed her family of her intention of becoming a Religious. She was immediately ordered back to her home in Swanton, Vermont, and for a year efforts were made to change her mind. She received offers of marriage and moved in gay company, but after a year she announced her determination to return to Montreal. She entered as a novice the Convent of the Hotel-Dieu, and made her profession in 1810. Among those who attended the ceremony was the Rev. Daniel Barber.

One day, six years later, a young man presented himself at the rectory of St. Peter's Church, then at 15 Jay Street. He gave his name to Father Fenwick as the Rev. Virgil Horace Barber, an Episcopal minister and the son of the Rev. Daniel Barber. He told Father Fenwick that he had discovered that a young Irish girl employed as a servant in his home, then Fairfield, New York, was making a Novena of Grace to St. Francis Xavier; that from mere curiosity he had borrowed from her the booklet she had used and it excited his interest in Catholic doctrines so much that he and his wife had come to New York to obtain further information from the books in St. Paul's and Trinity library and from the Episcopal Bishop Hobart. Not satisfied with what he obtained, he called at St. Peter's.

Several months later he returned to New York. He resigned



his ministry, opened a school in 24 Vesey Street, and he and his wife received their First Communion in St. Peter's Church in February, 1817. Six months later, he and his wife startled Father Fenwick by telling him that they had determined, if it was possible, to join a Religious Community if they could do so and make proper provision for their children. Father Fenwick advised strongly against the step. He was then recalled to Georgetown College and left the matter in the hands of the new Bishop Connolly. While at Georgetown, the Barbers wrote him again asking his assistance to help them carry out their determination. The result finally was that Barber was accepted as a Jesuit novice and his six-year-old son was placed as a pupil in the Georgetown Preparatory School. Mrs. Barber was accepted as a novice in the Visitation Convent near by, and their three daughters were placed as pupils in the same convent. The mother of Father Fenwick and of two other Jesuit sons, who lived near the convent, took the youngest daughter into her home because she was too young to attend school. The formal religious ceremony of separation between husband and wife took place in the chapel of the college. The rector of Georgetown, Father Grassi, took Barber with him to Rome, where he remained a year. On his return he went for a visit to his former home in New Hampshire, accompanied by Father Charles Ffrench, who had become pastor of St. Peter's. He spent a week with his father, Daniel Barber.

The result of that visit was that Daniel Barber's wife, his sister, a Mrs. Tyler, and her entire family, including her husband, four sons and four daughters, became Catholics. Their four girls all became Sisters of Charity and one of the sons was the first Catholic Bishop of Hartford. Daniel Barber, who had baptized Fanny Allen, soon after resigned his ministry, became a Catholic and after his wife's death spent the remainder of his life in various Jesuit houses in Maryland. Virgil Horace Barber and his wife met again in 1820, on the day when he took his vows as a Jesuit and she as a Visitation nun. He was ordained in 1822. He died in Georgetown in 1847. His son, Samuel Barber, became a Jesuit priest and all four of his daughters became nuns—three of them Ursulines and the youngest a Visitation nun in the same convent with her mother.



Where did it all begin? At Fanny Allen's profession in Montreal; in the rectory of St. Peter's Church in Barclay Street; or in the kitchen of Virgil Barber's home up near Schenectady, where a little Irish servant-maid soothed her lonesomeness in the fervent reading of her precious Novena-book which she had brought from Ireland so that in far-off America she could make her Novena of Grace to the great Apostle of the Indies?

I wish I had the time to recount the story of another woman born in St. Peter's parish whose cause of beatification is in progress. Mother Adelaide of St. Teresa, born O'Sullivan in 1817, who became Prioress of the Carmelite Convent in Leon, Spain. But her story must await another telling. Thomas F. Meehan, to whom Catholic New York is under so great a debt for his delightful historical studies, has told it well, and it will be set forth in full in Leo Ryan's splendid and comprehensive history of St. Peter's, to which reference has been made this evening by Percy King, the distinguished president of this Catholic Historical Society.

Around the years between 1818 and 1824, St. Peter's was the center of a terrific battle between the distracted Church authorities and the lay trustees. Unhappy dissensions arose. The authority of Bishop Connolly was directly challenged by the trustees. The pastor took sides with the Bishop, while two of the New York clergy sent to assist Father Ffrench supported the trustees. The struggle waged with great bitterness. The trustees even sent one of the priests friendly to them to Rome to protest against the stand of the Bishop. Faculties were withdrawn from two of the protesting clergy. Father Ffrench was upheld, but shortly after, at the direction of Propaganda, which had investigated the matter exhaustively, he left St. Peter's, and, after a short stay in New Brunswick, Canada, went to Boston, where his career was creditable and successful. The unfortunate controversy was ended by the election of trustees friendly to Bishop Connolly. There seems to be no doubt that the real reason for the dissension had as its basis, not so much a difference of opinion between trustee and clergy, nor financial differences, nor personal feuds, but rather fundamental racial differences and jealousies between the French and Irish, both clerical and lay.

Meanwhile St. Peter's suffered from a heavy debt and a decreased income. The debt in 1820 was \$45,000, which, with the running expenses, was a heavy load to carry and made necessary house to house collections.

From 1822 to 1849, the Rev. Dr. John Power conducted the affairs of the parish with satisfying success. He was a man of learning and piety and a distinguished orator. Upon the death of Bishop Connolly, he became the Administrator of the diocese. He established, with the aid of the Sisters of Charity, an orphan asylum housing 150 orphans. He was the popular choice for Bishop, but the choice fell on a French Sulpician, John Dubois, who for many years had been president of Mount St. Mary's College at Emmitsburg. The disappointment of the people of New York was so great that the new Bishop received a very cold reception. Neither as a Frenchman nor as a stranger was he welcome, and his beginning was most inauspicious. During his Episcopacy he was harassed not only by the evils of the trustee system, but by a growing hostility throughout the country to the Church. The rapid growth of the Church became a matter of concern to the various Protestant sects who could unite on only one platform and that one of opposition to the Church and the vicious and un-American Know Nothing movement then was born.

St. Mary's Church was first robbed and then burned to the ground. When St. Joseph's Church on lower Sixth avenue was being erected, the men of the parish had to guard the work at night lest it be destroyed. The new seminary at Nyack, after two years of construction, was burned down, just as it neared completion. A violently anti-Catholic publication, the *Protestant*, had a wide circulation. The notorious Maria Monk and others of her ilk commanded large audiences.

But St. Peter's grew and its congregation kept on increasing. In 1834, the old church had become not only inadequate, but unsafe. Despite innumerable difficulties, a new church was projected and the work commenced on June 5, 1836. The old burying ground adjoining the church had to be utilized and the bodies had to be reinterred and transferred to the Mott Street Cathedral ground. The cornerstone of the new church was laid on October 28, 1836. Bishop Dubois was then seventy-two years of age and was com-

pelled to ask for a coadjutor. Father Power, still pastor of St. Peter's, would have been most acceptable to most of the people, but it was not to be.

One day in 1837 a young priest called upon Bishop Dubois at the Bishop's house. He was no stranger. Eleven years before he had called upon the Bishop at St. Mary's College of which the Bishop was rector. He applied there for admission and was refused because there was little room and he could not pay the necessary cost of his tuition. Twice again he called and finally was given a job as gardener for the college. In return for his labor he was to be given such instruction as freedom from his duty caring for the grounds permitted. Now, for the fourth time, he faced the aging Bishop—this time to break the news that Gregory XVI had appointed him to be the Coadjutor Bishop of New York. The young Bishop-elect was John Hughes, later New York's great Archbishop and the nation's great citizen.

In the new St. Peter's the first Mass was said on September 3, 1837, and the church was completed and ready for its solemn blessing by Bishop Hughes on February 25, 1838. By 1840 there were nine churches in the city: St. Peter's, St. Patrick's, St. Mary's, St. Joseph's, St. James', Transfiguration, St. Nicholas' and St. Paul's in Harlem, with St. Ignatius Chapel in East Fiftieth Street.

With the approval of Bishop Hughes, Dr. Charles Constantine Pise, an assistant at St. Peter's, went to Ireland to collect funds for the new church. Dr. Pise had won distinction as a writer and won marked distinction from Rome because of his literary work in this country. He was a native of Annapolis and while an assistant at St. Patrick's Church in Washington had the distinction—remarkable considering the times—of being designated upon the nomination of Henry Clay as chaplain of the United States Senate. He was for nine years an assistant at St. Peter's and succeeded Dr. Power as pastor, but remained only a brief time, going to establish the Church of St. Charles Borromeo, Brooklyn, in 1849. This period was the most critical and distressing time financially that St. Peter's ever knew before or since. When the new church was completed, the debt rose to the sum of \$116,000. In a few years it mounted to \$135,000. The trustees

made the mistake, never since repeated in any Catholic parish in New York, of inducing many of the parishioners to deposit their savings on an agreement for an allowance of the same rate of interest as the savings banks were then paying. The response was very great, but the management was bad and things came to such a pass that in 1844 the Church corporation became bankrupt and an assignment for the benefit of the creditors was made.

The church, to the dismay of the Catholics and the consternation of the depositors, was actually sold at public auction at the Merchants' Exchange for \$46,000. Bishop Hughes had the property bid in for the diocese. The validity of the sale was challenged and the matter was thrown into the courts where it remained for five years. It was a ghastly period for the struggling church. Criticism and scurrility were everywhere rampant. The note-holders made the life of the Bishop a martyrdom. In 1849, worn down completely by conditions, Dr. Power died, and after a few months in charge of Dr. Pise, the church was given a new pastor in the person of Father William Quinn, who served from 1849 to 1873. The courts confirmed the validity of the sale so that the trustees were only accountable to the creditors for the purchase price of \$46,000. The total indebtedness was around \$150,000, every dollar of which, under the leadership of Father Quinn, was ultimately paid and every claimant satisfied.

In December, 1852, this happy event was celebrated with a *Te Deum* in the church, at which Bishop Hughes presided and preached a sermon in which he declared that so long as he remained head of the diocese no priest or Catholic layman should ever have the authority, in the name of religion, to receive one penny in the form of deposits. The one redeeming feature of this sad experience was that it contributed greatly to bringing about an end to the dangerous trustee system which passed out on August 20, 1850, when a deed to the property was delivered to and in the name of John Hughes. This act was seized upon by the Know Nothing element of the day and the Legislature was invoked by the anti-Catholics to prevent a Bishop, in his official capacity, from holding in his own name church property. The battle lasted until 1863, when the law, substantially as it exists today, allowing the incorporation of churches, was passed. It gave control to a board



composed of the Bishop, the Vicar General, the pastor and two lay trustees, selected by the Church authorities, to form a body corporate. That was amended as late as 1895 by requiring the consent of the Bishop to any acts of the board involving the sale or mortgaging of any of its property.

When Father Quinn gave up the pastorate of St. Peter's, after twenty-four years' service, to assume the direction of the Cathedral and the post of Vicar General, there was left only a debt of \$10,638, which was not a matter of difficulty or concern to take care of.

The Rev. Michael J. O'Farrell, pastor from 1873 to 1881, and later Bishop of Trenton, had a successful career, acquiring the site on Church and Cedar Streets which is still the famous School of St. Peter's under the direction of the Christian Brothers and the Daughters of Mother Seton. Father O'Farrell was succeeded as pastor by the Right Rev. Monsignor James H. McGean. His service ran from 1881 to 1926. Lack of time alone prevents us from paying him an adequate tribute. His notable achievement was effecting the solemn consecration of the church, which took place on November 22, 1885.

Monsignor McGean was a native New Yorker, a graduate of St. Francis Xavier College and of the Grand Seminary in Montreal. He was ordained here in 1864. Prior to his advent to St. Peter's, he had been an assistant at the old Cathedral and pastor of the Transfiguration parish. In 1881 he came to St. Peter's, where he remained for nearly half a century. Many of us knew him well and enjoyed his quiet humor and gentle manner. He was made a Monsignor in 1904. During his regime the old church was vastly improved with new marble altars and windows. But St. Peter's rapidly lost its prestige as a parish church by reason of the steady encroachment of business. In 1906 the downtown mid-day Mass was inaugurated and a noon-day mission given, which has been a popular feature ever since, especially during Lent. The two Eastern Rite churches, St. George's and St. Joseph's, which are in Washington Street, today, received their first encouragement from Monsignor McGean, their initial services being held in the basement of St. Peter's. The celebration of his golden jubilee as a priest was marked with pomp and ceremony



and varied testimonials which evidenced the high regard in which this venerable priest was held. He died at the age of eighty-five years, honored, respected and beloved.

Father James E. Noonan, the present esteemed permanent rector, served in St. Peter's as an assistant for twenty years before becoming its pastor in 1926. Like his predecessor, he too is a graduate of the College of St. Francis Xavier, where he was a classmate of the chairman who is presiding, with his usual grace and charm, over this gathering tonight. He was ordained in 1902 after the prescribed course in Dunwoodie Seminary. Other than St. Peter's, his only assignment was for five years at Tuxedo, New York.

Under the direction of Father Noonan, gradually a new church has emerged, so greatly improved as to be hardly recognizable to those who knew St. Peter's at the beginning of the century. Changes, additions and improvements have been made in recent years, which have transformed old St. Peter's into an edifice that ranks it among the most satisfying churches in the City of New York. In 1894 the main altar was improved by a marble mensa and tabernacle. In 1905 the upper church was entirely renovated with new floor, electric fixtures, three new marble altars and a complete redecoration. In 1928 a new Kilgen organ was installed. In 1930 a beautiful marble pulpit and marble shrines to the Sacred Heart and St. Anthony were added and in 1932 beautiful and striking stained glass windows added the finishing touches to make glorious this temple of the living God in Barclay Street. Not content with these additions to the upper church, in the same year three new marble altars were erected in the very devotional and artistic chapel in the basement which has been entirely transformed. All of these were the princely gifts of one New York family whose name will forever be enshrined on the brightest page of the history of St. Peter's. The donors were John, George and Edward Smith, as memorials of their parents, the late Mr. and Mrs. Edward Smith.

Every day at noontime it is crowded to the doors. It is a monument to the piety and devotion of the business people of New York, as well as to the fidelity and watchfulness of its faithful and efficient pastor.

In commemorating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the

foundation of St. Peter's, we are celebrating the growth and development of the Catholic Church in New York. From its humble and troubled beginning we have seen one church in the Archdiocese of New York grow into 456. From the day when one priest was all that New York had to care for its Catholic people, today we have a splendid army of 1,563, united under the guidance of a Cardinal Archbishop, himself a son of New York, who loves his city and its people, but not more than his people love and honor him and rejoice that they have so noble and so inspiring a leader.

We fortunate Catholics of New York must never forget how much we owe to those who struggled and suffered much that the Faith might be preserved for us and the priceless heritage of religious freedom might be placed in our hands to treasure and enjoy. It is for us to so order our lives so that this Faith of our fathers may ever be a living, vibrant thing, as much a part of our daily lives as the very air we breathe, so that those valiant pioneers who, a century and a half ago, builded better than they knew, shall not have sacrificed and labored in vain.

After Mr. Talley had concluded his address Cardinal Hayes, at the request of President King, then brought the formal proceedings to a close.

I do not propose to delay you long, said the Cardinal. The hour is late, and we have all, I am sure, enjoyed and profitted by the addresses of Judge Talley and Mr. King. It was indeed time well spent listening to Judge Talley's very instructive and edifying address on Old St. Peter's. I thought I knew a great deal about St. Peter's but I realize now that there was a great deal that I did not know. I am sure we are all going away from this meeting having profitted by the evening's addresses.

I want to thank you, Judge, for your splendid message, a message that has gone deep into the heart of your Archbishop, a message that we will all carry away with us. Judge Talley is always interesting when he talks on any Catholic subject. He is always charming and delightful, and is always animated by a truly Catholic spirit. He has the happy faculty of always giving

us something worthwhile. May God bless him for it and also for the great work he is doing for the Church in New York in building up once more the Catholic Club of which he is president.

And may I say to our newly decorated Sir Knight that I always look forward to these annual meetings of the United States Catholic Historical Society and that I am always pleased by what I hear and see here, and tonight has been no exception. Mr. King has the faculty of presiding at these meetings in a wholly delightful manner. I congratulate you again tonight on what has been accomplished by the Catholic Historical Society.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our dear friend, Mr. Thomas F. Meehan, for so happily weaving together this annual meeting and the anniversary of St. Peter's Church. This volume of the Historical Society dealing with the history of Old St. Peter's came to me only yesterday and I have become so interested in it that I simply cannot leave it out of my hands. It has been especially bound for me, as you can see, and it is indeed a very acceptable gift. As I read it, the figures it tells about throb with life, for some of them I knew, and all of them I revere.

It was my good fortune as a young priest to be associated with Cardinal Farley, who was a sort of link between this and an older generation, and I often heard him tell the story of St. Peter's and of other old parishes that he had heard from the lips of Cardinal McCloskey. Judge Talley has told you of the young priest who came to New York to be Coadjutor to Bishop Dubois, and there is one little incident that I recall Cardinal Farley telling me about the Coadjutor who was later to become the first Archbishop of the See. Of course, when a Bishop, or an Archbishop gets old he does not like to hear of a Coadjutor being around, for it makes him feel that his days are numbered. And Bishop Dubois did not want a Coadjutor and was somewhat gruff with his new assistant. Each morning the young priests of the rectory would greet the Bishop with a cheery "Good morning, Bishop, how do you feel this morning?" "Oh, I feel badly," the Bishop would reply. "I spent a terrible night and I am weary and tired." But when the new Coadjutor would say "Good morning, Bishop, how are you this morning?" he would answer, "Never felt better in my life."

I guess, said the Cardinal, that human nature is the same whether one wears the mitre or not.

So I wish to congratulate the Historical Society on all that its work means to the Catholic Church and to the people of New York and of the country. The people will read the story of St. Peter's parish and will be edified by it.

I congratulate Father Noonan on what he has done at St. Peter's. God must surely have guided me when I appointed Father Noonan as the successor of Monsignor McGean.

How we should thank God for what has transpired during the past one hundred and fifty years since St. Peter's Church was organized, and how we in the United States should thank God for the days in which we live, spared as we are from the troubles and disturbances of other times and other countries. These are times of great opportunity, of great opportunity to use the talents that we have received for greater services, greater loyalty to the ideals of our holy religion. An occasion like this goes far to stir our desire for Catholic Action, and may God's blessing come down upon this meeting and remain with us forever.

After the meeting a buffet luncheon was served to the members and their 600 guests.

# CONFEDERATE AGENTS IN IRELAND

BY IGNATIUS L. RYAN, C.P., M.A.

## PREFACE

The topic of this paper was suggested by a reading of "Catholic Participation in the Diplomacy of the Southern Confederacy," an address delivered before the American Catholic Historical Association in Washington, D. C., on December 27, 1929, by its President, Leo Francis Stock, Ph.D. The address was afterwards published in the *Catholic Historical Review*, Volume XVI, April.

My purpose is to unfold that practically unknown chapter in the history of Confederate European diplomacy, the mission to Ireland. An attempt is made to follow step by step the various Confederate agents in their efforts to thwart the alleged recruiting of the Irish peasants during the years of the American Civil War by the official representatives and agents of the Federal Government.

The materials drawn upon for the story are the "Pickett Papers," a term loosely used to designate the Archives of the defunct Confederate States of America. These Pickett Papers, or more properly, Confederate Archives, now repose in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C. They are called the Pickett Papers merely because Pickett was the name of the agent through whom the original papers were sold to the United States Government. The original papers have been added to from time to time, and some of these later papers, as for instance, those of James M. Mason, the Confederate Commissioner to England, are among the more valuable in the collection and never at any time came into the hands of Colonel Pickett.

Some days before the City of Richmond was taken by the Federals, on April 3, 1865, the Confederate archives were bundled together. Some were marked for destruction in case the danger to the city became imminent; some were carefully laid aside to be carried away in flight. On the evening of April 2, 1865, when it became evident the city could hold out no longer, the papers designated for safe-keeping were placed on a train which steamed



away to the South. In the haste and confusion of the flight many of the papers were lost. When they were removed from the train in Georgia for further transportation the number had dwindled so that it was possible for their custodians to carry them with comparative ease in their saddle-bags.

All trace of them was lost for three years, when quite unexpectedly Colonel Pickett, who had been one of the Confederate agents to Mexico and afterwards chief-of-staff to General John C. Breckenridge, wrote from Canada to Secretary Seward on January 20, 1868, offering to sell the salvaged papers to the United States Government. Much haggling over terms ensued. But finally, in June, 1872, by special act of Congress, the papers were purchased for \$75,000.

On July 3, 1872, four yellow trunks of documents arrived at the White House. The news leaked out as to their contents and a hubbub was raised. Prominent Southerners accused Pickett of having stolen the manuscripts. Others said the documents were forgeries. The North ridiculed Secretary of the Treasury George S. Boutwell for having squandered money on worthless papers. Colonel Pickett protested against the injustice of the charges made against him. "What right had I," he asked, "to destroy the material by which history is written? The person who spirited the papers away and held them in his possession was getting impatient and swore that he would dispose of them himself. When the papers were sold he received the greater part of the money and took the first train."

In course of time, however, some of those who had censured Pickett, came forward offering in like manner to sell the government important military documents. Many of these were bought by the Government and added to the collection. In time, too, Mason's papers, originally in possession of the Virginia Historical Society, were added.

Much important Confederate correspondence, however, is lacking: secret service papers destroyed by Judah P. Benjamin the day the Confederates set fire to Richmond; much of Jefferson Davis' correspondence; the manuscripts and letter-books of many of the Confederate agents, destroyed to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy at the close of the War, in April,

1865; and all the letters written by Mason and Slidell to Benjamin, or by Benjamin to them after December, 1864.

Time has proved the wisdom of this purchase by the Government, extravagant as the price paid may have appeared at the time. The Pickett Papers are considered today the most valuable collection of military papers in existence. Moreover, the names in the indices of the Pickett Papers together with the indices of the correspondence of the Confederate Treasury and other departments have saved the United States government millions of dollars, by enabling it to defeat fraudulent claims growing out of the War.

These facts concerning the Pickett Papers have been taken for the most part from James M. Callahan's *Diplomatic History of the Southern Confederacy*. Doctor Callahan obtained much of his information from persons either directly or indirectly associated with the history of the Papers.

It might be well to say a word here about a man whose name appears frequently in the course of this narrative. That man is Henry Hotze. His life has never been written. The main points in his career must be gleaned from the letters he exchanged with the Confederate State Department during the War and from a brief biographical sketch in the *Mobile Register* of May 11, 1867. He was a Swiss by birth, who was brought to America in infancy by his parents. His father seems to have prospered, and as a result, the boy was reared carefully and well. In his early twenties he was a secretary at the American legation in Brussels. He returned home to accept an editorial position on the *Mobile Register* in 1859. At the outbreak of the War he enlisted as a private in the Confederate army, but after only six months in the service, was recommended by Judah P. Benjamin, then Secretary of War, for transfer to the Department of State. At the age of twenty-seven, on January 29, 1862, he landed in England, an obscure young man, with but a small allowance from the State Department for salary and contingent funds, to assume the post of Confederate commercial agent in London. By 1864, he was, in his own modest and unassuming way, probably the most influential Confederate agent in Europe, with a system for procuring and dispensing information which would have done credit to an astute diplomat of many years' experience. As the War drew to a close the Con-

federate Government leaned more and more heavily upon this young man, whose splendid qualifications were so pitifully wasted upon a cause that was doomed. With the recall of James M. Mason, the official Confederate Commissioner to England, in the Summer of 1863, Henry Hotze became the sole guiding spirit of the Confederate activities in Great Britain, and as such lent invaluable aid and encouragement to the agents in Ireland. He saw the end approach and cursed the folly which had not permitted the Confederacy to recognize sooner the disaster which was sure to follow in the wake of unrestricted and unopposed Federal European recruiting.

My heartfelt thanks are due to Doctor Leo Francis Stock, Associate Professor of History at the Catholic University of America and to the Right Reverend Monsignor Peter Guilday, Professor of American Church History at the same institution, for their kindly encouragement and much valued assistance in the preparation of this paper which was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Graduate School of the Catholic University of America.

## INTRODUCTION

In June, 1862, a new cruiser was nearing completion in the shipyards of the Messrs. Laird, at Birkenhead on the Mersey in England. This cruiser was destined to create no little disturbance for some years to come in international diplomatic circles. Originally known as "No. 290," it assumed upon completion the name Alabama. Its construction had been followed with interest by the United States Consul across the river in Liverpool and as the month drew to a close, he wrote a letter to Charles Francis Adams, United States Minister to Great Britain, describing the craft and voicing his opinion that it was a man-of-war destined for the use of the new Confederate States of America. In due course the letter was forwarded by Mr. Adams to Earl Russell, Great Britain's Minister for Foreign Affairs, with a protest that if the consul's surmise was correct the act was a violation of England's Neutrality Proclamation. An investigation was instituted by Russell, but the inquiry moved slowly, and on July 28, one day before the final opinion was handed to Russell, the Alabama set sail from Liverpool. The vessel, however, did not immediately leave English waters. For two days it stood off the coast of Anglesey. Pursuit and detention of the suspected craft would have been comparatively easy, but to all appearances the British Ministry was indifferent.

The cruiser finally left England and anchored off the Azores. There it received armament from two British merchantmen out of Liverpool and was taken under command by Captain Raphael Semmes, a commissioned officer of the Confederate Navy. The boat never afterwards touched at an American port, yet it became for the South a formidable instrument of destruction. Sixty-five Federal vessels of a total value of \$4,000,000 succumbed to its attacks before it was itself sunk near Cherbourg by the Kearsage on June 19, 1864.

The Alabama safely launched upon its devastating career, Southern confidence that the maneuver could be repeated grew, and soon two sister-ships of English make and armament, the Florida and Shenandoah, were ploughing the Atlantic with her in search of Federal prey.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Rhodes, James Ford, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*. 5 vols. (New York and London, 1899), Vol. IV, p. 84.

The North was furious. This was insincere neutrality and thinly veiled hostility on the part of England and a direct violation by the South of the British Foreign Enlistment Act in the teeth of the English ministry. The quiet-mannered Adams, goaded on by the home government, exploded into strong language. "It would be superfluous in me," he said to Russell, "to point out to your Lordship that this is war."<sup>2</sup>

The anger of the Federalists and their friends in England reached a white heat when in March, 1863, correspondence relating to the building of Confederate cruisers in England was captured and given to the newspapers. Parliament was in session and John Bright, the popular orator of the House of Commons and the mouthpiece of the Northern sympathizers in England, undertook to upbraid the Government for its indifference in the matter of the Alabama, warning the Ministry that the United States had the sympathy of the English working people and was draining numbers of emigrants from Ireland and that it might be inclined to retaliate for the government's unfriendliness. Forster and other members of the Liberal party joined their voices to Bright's, citing the example of the strict neutrality of the United States in the Crimean War and urging Lord Russell to do all in his power to prevent the departure of any more English-built Confederate cruisers.

But the South found a champion in John Laird, Conservative Member from Birkenhead and the survivor of the firm of Scottish brothers who had built the Alabama. With characteristic dourness he retorted that the North, too, was buying war supplies in England and that he would rather build a hundred Alabamas than have anything to do with the United States whose "ubiquitous spies made her boasted liberty an absurdity."

Lord Palmerston, the Premier, closed the debate with the observation that neutrality was hard to preserve, but that English neutrality was honest and that therefore the Government was ready to act on evidence.<sup>3</sup>

To make good the Premier's boast, the government seized the

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<sup>2</sup>See Adams, Charles F. Jr., *Charles Francis Adams* (Boston and New York, 1900) p. 306, ff.

<sup>3</sup>Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*. Ser. 3 (London, 1860-65), Vol. 170, pp. 33-72, 90-101.



newly-built Alexandria on April 6, 1863. There was a storm of protest from the Confederate lobby in Parliament. It was denied that the Alexandria was building for the Confederacy. The attention of the government was drawn to the outrage inflicted upon international relations by the United States in its sinking of the stone fleet in the harbor of Charleston. But the master-stroke of the whole debate on the part of the Southern sympathizers was the accusation that the North itself was violating the Foreign Enlistment Act by its recruiting of peasants in Ireland for the Federal Army.<sup>4</sup> This accusation made in the heat of controversy and without sufficient evidence at the time to demonstrate the truth of the statement was destined, nevertheless, to open up, if not one of the most important, certainly one of the most interesting chapters in Confederate diplomacy.

For long the conviction had been growing in England that an extensive Federal secret service organization was at work in Ireland inducing young Irishmen to emigrate to the Northern States, ostensibly for work on the turnpikes, canals and railroads, but in reality for service in the Northern armies. No definite proof that such activity was going on had thus far been produced, but the rumor persisted. In February, 1863, James M. Mason, the Confederate Commissioner to England, had written to a friend in Liverpool asking him to investigate the matter in that seaport city whence so many emigrants left for American shores. The friend, a Mr. J. H. Ashbridge, reported on March 3, that he had had two detectives on the job for a fortnight, but that although he was convinced that the Federal government had such agents in Great Britain, up to the present he had been unable to obtain proof of actual recruiting. He assured Mason, however, that he was certain proof could be secured for a hundred pounds, if the Commissioner believed the evidence to be worth that much to the South. The letter closed with the information that the Steamship Damascus was scheduled to sail for New York on the following Tuesday with a cargo of muskets labelled "Hardware" and with a full load of steerage passengers said to be recruits.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates, Commons*. Ser. 3 (London, 1860-65), Vol. 70, April 24, 1863.

<sup>5</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Ashbridge to Mason, March 3, 1863.

Two weeks after the receipt of this letter by Mason and just before the celebrated Alabama debate in Parliament riots with bloodshed and arson broke out in Ireland over the marriage of the Prince of Wales. The affair took place in Cork and became so violent that the military was called out. The Liverpool *Albion* commenting upon the disturbance, openly attributed it to the machinations of Federal agents anxious to embarrass the Government and alleged as proof "that recruiting for the Federal armies is carried on to a great extent in Ireland."<sup>6</sup>

Henry Hotze, the Confederate Commercial Agent at London, forwarded an account of these happenings and the comment of the newspaper to Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State for the Confederacy, but remarked upon the assertion of the Liverpool *Albion*, that with what truth the charge was made he would not pretend to say.<sup>7</sup>

Benjamin's reaction to this intelligence was sharp and instant. By return mail he indicted a letter to Mason.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
April 29, 1863.

SIR: The delay in the steamer's departure enables me to address you on a subject which attracts the earnest attention of this government.

By the last European and Northern mails we are informed that extensive enlistments are now in progress in Ireland of recruits for the armies of the United States. It is of course impossible for us here to be as well informed on this subject as you must be in London but there seems to be an absence of all disguise in the public journals, and no intimation is given of any effort on the part of her Majesty's government to arrest so flagrant a breach of the neutrality which has been announced as the fixed policy of Great Britain. It is assumed however that so grave a matter cannot have escaped your attention and that you have not failed both to procure the necessary evidence to establish the facts, and to place that evidence with proper representations in possession of Earl Russell.

It is not necessary to recur to the memorable conduct of the Government of the United States during the Crimean War,

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<sup>6</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 20, March 21, 1863; No. 2 (Private), March 21, 1863.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

nor to the harsh and peremptory manner in which it asserted its right to prevent foreign enlistments on its territory, in order to justify your representations on the present occasion. The President is persuaded that no citation of precedents is required to induce Her Majesty's Government to give effect to Her Majesty's Proclamation of Neutrality, and to arrest the lawless attempts of the official agents of the United States to effect designs violative of the territorial sovereignty of the British Queen, and manifestly hostile to this Confederacy.

In the expectation that you have been able to obtain satisfactory evidence and with full confidence that on a simple communication of the facts on which our complaint is grounded Her Majesty's Government will take measures to prevent the commission of acts subversive both of the municipal law of Great Britain and of international obligations, you are instructed if you have not previously done so, to bring this matter to the attention of Earl Russell.

I am, sir, respectfully,

HON. JAMES M. MASON,  
Commissioner,  
London.<sup>8</sup>

Your obedient servant  
J. P. BENJAMIN,  
*Secretary of State.*

That the suspicions of the friends of the Confederacy in England in regard to Federal activities there and the alarm of the Confederate cabinet in Virginia over those suspicions were not without foundation we now know. Federal recruiting in Europe was no haphazard affair carried on in fits and starts. It was a policy as carefully thought out and as well executed as any Federal movement within the States.

Early in the War, in 1861, it was discovered by the Federal officers that the foreign-born element in the army, especially the Irish and Germans, made better soldiers than the average native American. The principal reasons for this were their sturdy physique and reckless courage. The one made them impervious to the diseases which spread with frightening rapidity from the insanitary and filthy condition of the camps in the early stages of the War; the other gave them strength to bear without murmuring the hardship and suffering because of which many deserted. They were buoyed up, too, with a sense of grateful duty to the country

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<sup>8</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Benjamin to Mason, No. 21, April 29, 1863.

which had given them a measure of political and social equality to which they had been strangers in their home countries.<sup>9</sup>

The willingness of these immigrants, many of them Catholics, to fight for their adopted country is all the more remarkable when we remember the almost continuous nativist agitation against them in the North for the thirty years preceding the war. Everything possible was done to insult and outrage their nationality and religion. Their homes were sacked, their churches and convents burned, their priests and nuns ridiculed and defamed. Efforts were made to keep them from the franchise and when, on rare occasions, one of them, as a naturalized citizen, was elected to municipal office, attempts were set on foot to deprive him of the honor. Organizations were formed to ostracize and oppress them, such as the Supreme Order of the Star-Spangled Banner, their cumulative efforts giving rise to the nefarious Know Nothing Movement of the decade previous to the war.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, these despised and marked men gladly volunteered their lives in defense of the unity of a country, which in spite of their inimical fellow-citizens, they had grown to admire and love because of the solid basis and sound principles upon which it was builded.

As defeat, disease and desertion, therefore, wrought havoc in the ranks of the army in the early years of the War, William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, determined upon a campaign designed to introduce still more of this salutary foreign-born leaven into the troops.

But the operation must be a singularly prudent and secret one. Southwestern Germany, Prussia, Austria, France and Great Britain, the countries from which the majority of the recruits would of necessity come, were standing on a basis of strict neutrality. In fact, England at times inclined to favor the South. France certainly did so to a point just short of recognition. Accordingly great caution must be exercised. It would not do to antagonize

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<sup>9</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, August 24, 1864. Enclosure Cf.—Trollope, Anthony, *North America* (New York, 1863), pp. 423, 428. Cf. Smith, Goldwin, *The Civil War in America: An Address Read at the Last Meeting of the Manchester Union and Emancipation Society* (London, 1866) pp. 56, 57.

<sup>10</sup>Schlesinger, Arthur, Meier, *Political and Social History of the United States, 1829-1925* (New York, 1931), p. 134.



these powerful and apparently wavering foreign governments. Besides, England was prepared against any such possible move by its Foreign Enlistment Act.

Seward made the first approach with singular adroitness. His circular No. 19 of August 8, 1862 sent out to all the American embassies and consulates and reprinted in all the leading European newspapers was a masterpiece of war propaganda considering the masses whom it was destined to influence.<sup>11</sup>

William L. Dayton, United States Minister to France, expressed great satisfaction over the circular. He said that already within a month there had been "a perfect rush" of prospective immigrants to the legation and that he was sure "under the inducements thus held out to laborers, and the temptations of our military service with its pay and bounties" there would be a great exodus to America. He added that "the exhaustive character of the struggle in which our country is engaged seems to call for some such remedy to supply the depletion."<sup>12</sup>

John Bigelow, Consul-General at Paris, second only to Minister Adams in England in ability and influence, and himself later American Minister to France was entrusted with the handling of the campaign over-seas. He tells us in his *Retrospections of an Active Life* that Europe was covered with a network of emigration agencies to induce men to go to America. He says of Seward's circular, it "deserves a place in this record if for no other reason than the light it throws upon the mysterious repletion of our army during the four years of war, while it was notoriously being so fearfully depleted by firearms, disease and desertion." Apropos of the circular, Seward himself remarked to Bigelow that "to some extent this civil war must be a trial between the two parties to exhaust the other. The immigration of a large mass from Europe would of itself decide it."<sup>13</sup>

That Bigelow's statement regarding the magnitude of the Federal foreign enlistment activity was not an exaggeration can be seen from the reports of many of the Confederate agents, Mason, Mann,

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<sup>11</sup>Diplomatic Correspondence, *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs*, Department of State, Part I (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1862), p. 172.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.* Dayton to Seward, No. 19, September 9, 1862, pp. 387-388.

<sup>13</sup>Bigelow, John, *Retrospections of an Active Life*. 5 vols. (New York, 1909-13), Vol. I., p. 563, ff.



Lamar, Hotze. Hotze, especially, who by means of the news agencies and the telegraph was in touch with all the corners of Europe was dismayed at the results of the Federal efforts in this regard. To counteract the campaign he established a Confederate propagandist agency at Turin in Italy, and again and again, tried to induce Benjamin to send agents to Germany.<sup>14</sup> Mason, after his own mission to England had collapsed in the previous Summer, wrote from Paris, seconding Hotze's appeal and asking leave of the State Department to set up an agency at Frankfort.<sup>15</sup> Even the obscure cantons of Switzerland did not escape the combing of the Federal recruiting agents, so that the Swiss Government in order to protect its citizens issued a circular warning them of the dangers of emigrating to America.<sup>16</sup>

The campaign was even extended into the English colonies. Lieutenant Wilkinson of the Confederate Navy says in speaking of Canada: "Wherever we travelled even through the remotest settlements, recruiting agents for the United States Army were at work, scarcely affecting to disguise their occupation. . . ." He continues:

"It has been asserted by those who were in a position to form a correct estimate, that the British Provinces, alone contributed 100,000 men to the Federal Army. It is scarcely an exaggeration to add that the population of the civilized world was subsidized."<sup>17</sup>

The South, therefore, had good reason to be alarmed, when in the late Spring and early Summer of 1863 Benjamin and the Confederate leaders in Richmond began to realize that the North was wielding against them a weapon more powerful than cannon or musket, an apparently exhaustless man-power in the stream of which they must inevitably succumb.

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<sup>14</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts—Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 27, August 27, 1863; No. 47, July 29; No. 49, September 17, No. 50, October 14, No. 51, November 26, all of 1864.

<sup>15</sup>L. of C., Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Mason to Benjamin, No. 14, Nov. 10, 1864.

<sup>16</sup>L. of C. Div. of Manuscripts—Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 50, October 14, 1864.

<sup>17</sup>Wilkinson, Captain John, *The Narrative of a Blockade Runner* (New York, 1877), p. 181.

## I

### ROBERT DOWLING

When Benjamin's peremptory letter of April 29, 1863, ordering immediate action on the Federal recruiting in Ireland reached England, Mason was in ill health.<sup>1</sup> Hotze, therefore, undertook to convey to the State Department the results of the investigation at the Liverpool docks. One of the detectives employed reported, says Hotze, "that from the character of the emigrants; the small proportion of females and the fact that the passages of the men are nearly all paid by Marshall & Co. of New York, he has no doubt of the character of the emigration, but that legal evidence can only be procured by going to Ireland and duping the recruiting agents."<sup>2</sup>

Hotze expressed himself as not so well pleased with such tactics, but said he had nevertheless authorized the friend in Liverpool to make the necessary expenditures in the matter provided there was reasonable prospect of securing useful evidence. "You will understand," he continues, "that these measures, all more or less *ad captandem*, are devised for the special purpose which is to act upon the masses rather than the intelligence of the country as has been heretofore my aim. The intelligence of the country is now unanimous in our favor, and would gladly allow its timidity or scruples to be overcome by a popular movement which had even the appearance of strength."<sup>3</sup>

Two days later, Mason himself was able to take the situation in hand. There was a young man in Ireland, Robert Dowling, who three months previously, had been appointed Confederate commercial agent at Cork.<sup>4</sup> To him Mason now wrote urging an investigation into the Federal activities at the port of Queenstown. Mason said:

I enclose herewith an extract of a despatch from the De-

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<sup>1</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Macfarland to Mann, May 14, 1863.

<sup>2</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 23, June 6, 1863.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Secretary of State. No. 1, November 17, 1863.

partment of State relating to the alleged enlistments in Ireland, to which I beg leave to call your attention. You will see that it has strongly attacked the attitude of the Government, and being on the spot I hope it may be in your power to institute such inquiries as will enable me to bring the subject in a tangible form before Lord Russell.

Of course the enlistments are made by the Federal agencies under false pretenses: such, it is said, as pretended engagements for laborers on railroads in the United States or as farm hands. You will know in what manner most successfully to direct these inquiries, with a view to get at the *facts* however they may be disguised. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Upon receipt of this letter Dowling took up his vigil in Queenstown. Daily, during this Summer of 1863, as he later testified, he saw an "enormous number of people in a floodtide of immigration in merchant-immigrant vessels leave for the Northern States."<sup>6</sup> Yet he was unable to secure any evidence likely to be regarded by a British court as real violation of the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1818 until November. In that month the Federals decided upon an especially daring bit of recruiting.

On November 2, a Federal frigate, the *Kearsarge* steamed into the harbor to be coaled. Its presence caused a flurry in the port. There was a standing order of February 12, 1862, with the Customs Collectors that the arrival of a man-of-war of either of the American belligerents was to be reported immediately to the British Admiral resident in Queenstown. The Admiral, Lewis J. Jones, was accordingly notified and he ordered the cruiser to depart at once. But with a blandness characteristic of the "Yankee" officers, the order was ignored. Under pleas of coaling and stress of weather, the *Kearsarge* dallied in the Irish port five days.<sup>7</sup>

The captain came ashore and Eastman, the United States Consul at Queenstown, and his assistant, Dawson, were seen on board in conversation with the ship's officers. The rumor soon spread among the hangers-on at the docks and over the cups in the grog-

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<sup>5</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Secretary of State, No. 1, November 17, 1863.

<sup>6</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Whiteside, November 24, 1863.

<sup>7</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, November 25, 1863; Dowling to Whiteside, Nov. 24, 1863.

shops that the Federal officers were enlisting men for the support of the War in America.<sup>8</sup>

The pay offered was good, twelve dollars a month. Many ready volunteers were found among the idle and curious, the inexperienced being taken on as landsmen, the experienced seamen as petty officers. In one instance, a sailor was lucky enough to secure a berth as second paymaster.<sup>9</sup>

Admiral Jones could scarcely have been ignorant of all this, yet he remained indifferent. Robert Dowling therefore determined to act. He succeeded in getting sworn depositions from two of the volunteers. Whether or not these two men, Edward Lynch and Patrick Kennedy, were agents of his is hard to say. It is significant, however, that neither of them sailed with the Kearsarge, though one of them was formally enlisted and was actually on board when anchor was weighed on the night of November 6.

The stories of the two men, sworn to before a notary public in Cork, coincide in their main features. Both were of peasant stock and natives of Queenstown. Both had heard that enlistments for the Federal service were being made aboard the Kearsarge. In company with two other Irishmen, Daniel O'Connell and John Connelly, Edward Lynch boarded the boat and stayed there a whole day sharing the dinner and supper of the crew and returning to shore at half-past five in the afternoon. He testifies that O'Connell and Connelly were accepted for service and underwent a physical examination by the ship's doctor, but that he was rejected by the boatswain because of his height. He says there were about two hundred hands on board, "principally Irish and English."<sup>10</sup>

Kennedy's deposition substantiates that of Lynch. Having heard the rumor of the Federal enlisting with the offer of pay at twelve dollars a month, he and three companions, two of whom were from the lighthouse at Queenstown, went on board the Kearsarge on Tuesday, November 3.

They were given a physical examination and accepted for the United States Naval Service. Kennedy left the boat at four o'clock

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<sup>8</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, Enclosures Nos. 1 and 2, Nov. 25, 1863.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, Enclosure No. 1, November 25, 1863.

in the afternoon, promising to report at seven that evening. As a matter of fact, he did not come back until seven o'clock the next morning. That day, November 4, he had three meals on board, breakfast, dinner and supper. Seven or eight more Irishmen reported in the course of the day, all of whom told him they had passed the doctor's examination and been accepted for service. He was on the boat the night it sailed, November 6, but tells us that as the pilot was about to cast off, he slipped into the harbor-boat and returned to port while the rest were sleeping. Like Lynch, he testifies that there were two hundred men on board "nearly all Irish."<sup>11</sup>

Dowling was jubilant at his success. Here was proof, not indeed, of a great enlistment, but of the fact that the South's accusations about the elusive illegal activity of the North were true. The depositions were taken on November 16, and 18, and on November 24, Dowling wrote to the Right Honorable James Whiteside, Member of Parliament, from that section, and a staunch friend of the Confederacy, acquainting him with his findings and protesting against the presumption with which Federal men-of-war invaded a country declared to be neutral and defiantly enlisted the subjects of England.<sup>12</sup>

The mission of James M. Mason to Great Britain meanwhile had been suspended in August by order of the Confederate government at Richmond and Mason had left England for Paris to take up his quarters temporarily with his friend, John Slidell, Confederate Commissioner to the Court of the Emperor, Napoleon III.<sup>13</sup> In one of the letters of recall Benjamin suggested that matters of importance affecting the Confederacy in Great Britain might in the interim be referred to Slidell or to Hotze.<sup>14</sup> Slidell, accordingly, paid a visit to England and Ireland in November, and Dowling conferred with him on the Kearsarge case. Slidell advised that the depositions of Lynch and Kennedy be given to the press.

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<sup>11</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, Enclosure No. 2, November 25, 1863.

<sup>12</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Whiteside, November 24, 1863.

<sup>13</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Benjamin to Mason, No. 30, August 4, 1863; Mason to Mann, Nov. 24, 1863.

<sup>14</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Benjamin to Mason, No. 31, August 17, 1863.



Dowling promised to do this, as soon as he should have a reply from Mr. Whiteside.<sup>15</sup> Hotze, however, had other ideas. When Dowling's report enclosing the deposition and a copy of the letter to Whiteside reached London for transmission to the State Department at Richmond, Hotze wrote in haste to the Irish agent, begging him not to give the matter any publicity for the present.<sup>16</sup>

The last session of Parliament in the Spring of 1863 had taught the Confederates and their friends in England where one of their great weaknesses lay. A powerful Federal lobby was working against them through Parliament and indirectly upon public opinion. The influence thus wielded must be counteracted. Hotze had determined to direct his propaganda during the Summer toward the common people and the months had been months of feverish activity for him.

An "Address of the Southern Clergy to Christians," a pamphlet, was bound up under the same cover with every respectable religious publication of the season and with the two leading British political reviews, the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh*. This particular publication Hotze estimated to have reached between one and two million people all over the world.<sup>17</sup> Hotze's own untiring pen kept up a persistent attack both in his Confederate paper, the *Index*, and in other leading London newspapers, upon the Federal lobby and the shilly-shally policies of the British Ministry. Lord Russell, especially, was singled out for his "very marked and impolitic partisanship in favor of the United States"; Hotze accusing him of licking the feet of Adams and biting everyone else who ventured within the length of his chain—while rifles and Irishmen were sent to New York in shiploads with impunity.<sup>18</sup> The staff of the *Index* was increased and "constructed"—to use Hotze's own words—"very much on the principle of a voltaic pile, communicating by invisible wires with almost every great center

<sup>15</sup>L. of C. Div. of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 33, Nov. 28, 1863.

<sup>16</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, November 25, 1863.

<sup>17</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 26, July 23, 1863.

<sup>18</sup>Callahan, J. M., *Diplomatic History of the Southern Confederacy*. Albert Shaw Lectures on Diplomatic History, Johns Hopkins University, (Baltimore, 1900-29) Vol. II, p. 198.

of intelligence in Europe and America.”<sup>19</sup> Nor did he stop with newspaper articles and editorials. Under the pseudonym of “Vigilans” he attacked the British government for the seizure of the *Alexandra* in a book entitled: “*The Foreign Enlistment Acts of England and America*.”

With the Fall, attention turned very naturally to the next session of Parliament. He was anxious that in the next meeting of that body the Confederate lobby should be at least as strong as the Federal. And so it was with great satisfaction that he wrote to Benjamin in November, 1863, just before Dowling’s report arrived, to the effect that:

... another agitation . . . is now being organized with its head-quarters in London by Mr. A. J. B. Beresford Hope, one of our most zealous friends. The names of our committee, so far as formed, comprise men of both the great parties, and of the highest social position. They are—Marquis of Lothian, Lord E. Cecil, Lord Wharcliffe, Mr. Eustice Halliburton, Mr. Lindsay, M.P., Mr. Peacock, M.P., Mr. Vansittart, M.P., Mr. Spence, Mr. Akroyd, Marquis of Bath, Hon. C. W. Fitzwilliam. The mere publication of this committee, which will take place after its first meeting at Mr. Hope’s residence on the 2nd. prox. will be a demonstration of no ordinary strength.<sup>20</sup>

This organization was to be known as the Southern Independence Association and it was Hotze’s hope that it would elect as its executive officer “an experienced Parliamentary Agent, whose profession is to engineer measures through the two Houses.”

“Heretofore,” he said, “no systematic effort has been made to organize and discipline our Parliamentary strength. Consequently no man of really commanding position could stake his prestige on the championship of our cause.”<sup>21</sup>

Dowling’s communication, with the enclosures of the sworn statements of Lynch and Kennedy, seemed to Hotze to be heaven-sent. Here was ammunition to hand for the attack which the

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<sup>19</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 52, December 31, 1863.

<sup>20</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 32, November 21, 1863.

<sup>21</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 35, January 17, 1864.

newly organized Confederate lobby hoped to open up in the next Meeting of Parliament in 1864. Hotze, therefore, wrote to Benjamin that despite the advice of Slidell, he had instructed Dowling to withhold the publication of the statements for the present, believing that more effective use of them could be made by the Association now forming. "If not previously published," he advised, "I think it likely that the Association may make them the basis of a memorial to the Foreign Office."<sup>22</sup>

In this he was doomed to disappointment. Perhaps his letter did not reach Dowling in time; perhaps Dowling considered that Slidell's advice was to be preferred to Hotze's. At any rate, the depositions found their way into British press before the end of the month.<sup>23</sup> How Hotze felt about the incident is hard to say, but the following letter written to Benjamin in April, 1864, seems significant of his attitude toward Dowling:

. . . . Before quitting the subject of Ireland I hope you will excuse my directing your attention to another point. One of your agents, duly commissioned as the Commercial Agent at Queenstown, receives, as I understand, no compensation for his services. I have no personal acquaintance with this gentleman but have on many occasions had correspondence with him, and am satisfied that he cooperates cordially and to the best of his ability with the other agents. I would respectfully suggest that a salary, however small, be allowed him; the half of the consular pay, provided for that port by the old regulations, viz. \$1,000 would probably be acceptable, and would avoid embarrassments which I foresee must sooner or later arise from his anomalous position. You will understand that this suggestion is not made at his request or with his knowledge but entirely on the principle that the Government should not accept the gratuitous services of any regularly appointed agent, even if he tenders them, as in doing so it places either too low or else altogether too high a value on those services.<sup>24</sup>

It is noteworthy that in Hotze's *Exhibit of the Disbursements of the Secret Service Fund of the C. S. Commercial Agency at London From November 64, 1861 to December 31, 1864*, an en-

<sup>22</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 33, November 28, 1863.

<sup>23</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 34, December 26, 1863.

<sup>24</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 40, April 16, 1864.

closure in his letter to Benjamin, No. 52, December 31, 1864, Dowling is the only Irish agent whose name fails to appear among those credited yearly with receiving salary.

Hotze's only comment to Benjamin upon the collapse of his plans in regard to the use of the depositions was, "A curious result of the premature publication of the depositions previously mentioned—which happened accidentally and contrary to my advice—has been that the Kearsarge returned to Queenstown and landed the men enlisted."<sup>25</sup>

Dowling in his next letter to the Secretary of State, on January 28, 1864, informed Benjamin that he had laid the matter of the Kearsarge before Lord Russell, who had instituted an investigation with the result that six of the men who had been enlisted were being held in bail to appear at the next General Assizes in March to be tried for a violation of Her Majesty's Proclamation in regard to enlistment. He went on to say that there was still one more man on board who had been engaged by certain parties in Queenstown and that he did not yet despair of involving either Mr. Eastman himself, the American Consul, or else Mr. Dawson, his agent, in the enlistment of this individual.<sup>26</sup>

Speaking of the Irish emigration in general, he says in this same letter that there had been an abatement during the Winter, but that "the approaching Spring evinces an alarming increase which adds to the necessity of being provided with means to frustrate the infernal designs of Yankee agents and bring them to justice."<sup>27</sup>

Here, Robert Dowling's active participation in the campaign against Federal recruiting in Ireland came to an end. He returned to the more routine duties of his post. In November he had been joined by Lieutenant James L. Capston of the Confederate Army sent from Richmond by Secretary Benjamin for the special purpose of combating the emigration.<sup>28</sup> Lieutenant Capston was soon to be joined by Father John Bannon, and together they were to labor zealously to persuade the Irish people from taking part in the American conflict.

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<sup>25</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 34, December 26, 1863.

<sup>26</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, January 28, 1864.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, November 25, 1863.



## II

### JAMES L. CAPSTON

The Federal recruiting campaign was already on foot seven or eight months before Hotze wrote his first letter to Benjamin on the subject. That this campaign could have been carried on with such success under the ever-vigilant eyes of Henry Hotze, and despite the presence of the ubiquitous Edwin DeLeon on the Continent, under the shadow of two successive official Confederate Missions to England and France and in the face of international law and the British Foreign Enlistment Act was a tribute to the efficiency and secrecy with which the Federal agents prosecuted their work.

In fact the affair was managed with such a degree of efficient secrecy that even today data is to a great extent lacking as to the methods employed and the actual number of aliens inducted into service.

Hotze's communications to Benjamin in the Spring of 1863 caused a flurry in Confederate Richmond. Before hostilities began and during the first months of the war the Southerners were inclined to be contemptuous of the Federal army—a mere handful of mercenaries—"damned Yankees" and "ignorant Irish"—20,000 in all—with the officers untrained and not to be trusted.<sup>1</sup>

But with all the apparent superiority of the Confederate forces in personnel and in training, and despite the more or less constant victorious pressure of the Confederate upon the Union Army, the latter constantly improved and the breaches in its ranks were quickly filled up. Immigration was the answer. For years the great flux of immigration had been to the Northern and not to the Southern States. This immigration was now being speeded up by artificial means and the immigrants rapidly turned into soldiers—to such an extent that whole regiments, officers and men, could be found in which was scarcely one so-called native American.<sup>2</sup> The South, therefore, was steadily consuming itself

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<sup>1</sup>Russell, William Howard, *My Diary North and South* (New York), p. 10. Cf. —

Sargent, F. W., *England, the United States and the Southern Confederacy*. 2nd Edit. revised and amended (London), 1864, p. 168.

Smith, Goldwin, *The Civil War in America, etc.*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>2</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 49, September 17, 1864; No. 60, October 14, 1864. Cf. — Trollope, Anthony, *North America*, pp. 108, 414, 423, 424.



in the struggle, while the North was being rejuvenated by the constant infusion of a new life and vigor.<sup>3</sup>

The Southern leaders began to realize with Seward that "the immigration of a large mass from Europe would of itself decide the contest." This, they now knew to be particularly true of the emigration from Ireland. Social and political conditions were bad there and great numbers were monthly availing themselves of the opportunity to seek the advantages which America held out. Counsel was therefore taken. It was determined to counteract the Federal forcing of emigration by "educating" the Irish people as to the nature of the war being waged in America and by exposing the real aims of the commercial agents who so obligingly offered free passage and employment to such as might be inclined to leave their mother-country for the brightly-pictured prosperity of the New World. On July 6, 1863, therefore Benjamin wrote to Mason:

I note what you state in relation to the recruiting by the enemy in Ireland. While it is satisfactory to know that you are diligent in the matter, we have determined to send two or three Irishmen, long residents of our country, to act as far as they can in arresting these unlawful acts of the enemy, by communicating directly with the people and spreading among them such information and intelligence as may be best adapted to persuade them of the folly and wickedness of volunteering their aid in the savage warfare waged against us. I enclose you copy of the instructions to one of them, that you may be fully possessed of our motives and purposes.<sup>4</sup>

The agent here referred to was Lieutenant James L. Capston. He was a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, a resident of Virginia, and a distinguished young Confederate officer who had offered himself voluntarily for the secret service.<sup>5</sup> He left Richmond on July 6, 1863, and after a journey of almost two months arrived in London on September 2. Mason's commission to England having by this time been withdrawn, Capston presented himself

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<sup>3</sup>Trollope, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

<sup>4</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Benjamin to Mason, No. 29, July 6, 1863.

<sup>5</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Benjamin to Capston, July 3, 1863. Cf. —

*Catholic Historical Review*, "Catholic Participation in the Diplomacy of the Southern Confederacy," Leo Francis Stock, Vol. XVI, April, No. 1.

with his credentials and instructions to Hotze.<sup>6</sup> Hotze was pleased with the young man's personality and his zeal for the work. The new agent would not tarry, but left the same night for Ireland. Due to an inadequate knowledge of the exact state of affairs at this time in Ireland, Hotze was unable to give Capston any definite directions, but instructed him to survey his field first and then confer with him fully and frequently in addition to his monthly report.<sup>7</sup>

Benjamin, however, had left Capston no room for doubt as to what was expected of him or just how he was to set to work. In the letter of commission he said:

The duty which it is proposed to entrust to you is that of a private and confidential agent of this government for the purpose of proceeding to Ireland and there using all legitimate means to enlighten the population as to the true nature and character of the contest now waged in this continent, with the view of defeating the attempts made by the agents of the United States to obtain in Ireland recruits for their armies. It is understood that under the guise of assisting needy persons to emigrate, a regular organization has been formed of agents in Ireland who leave untried no method of deceiving the laboring population into emigrating, for the ostensible purpose of seeking employment in the United States, but really for the recruiting of the Federal armies. . . .<sup>8</sup>

While admitting that the methods of combating this propaganda could not adequately be suggested from Richmond, the Secretary of State, nevertheless, gave a few hints as to possible procedure. The agent could throw himself into the midst of the common people where the Federals were at work. He could make friends among them, explaining the real purpose of the agents who pretended to befriend them. He could describe the brutal nature of the War into which they were being sucked and the fate of their countrymen who had allowed themselves to be deceived by the honeyed words of the recruiting officers.

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<sup>6</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 28, September 5, 1863; Capston to Benjamin, October 1, 1863. The dates here do not agree; Capston says he reported on the first of the month; but it is not the only mistake Capston makes in dates.

<sup>7</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 28, September 5, 1863.

<sup>8</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Benjamin to Capston, July 3, 1863.

Benjamin especially pointed out that the religious aspect could be dwelt upon—what had been the *real* feeling of the North toward the Irish and particularly towards the Catholics just prior to the War. He directed that Capston stress the fact, that no matter what the Federal agents might say to the contrary, that feeling still persisted, as could be seen from the outrages perpetrated in the South during the war by the Federal troops upon Catholics and the Catholic Church. To make the argument more effective he suggested that Capston take along with him copies of the New York *Freeman's Journal*, a Northern paper, which freely detailed these assaults upon Catholic chapels and places of worship. The Secretary added, however, that whatever means Capston employed in his propaganda, those means should be "strictly legitimate, honorable and proper" and not offensive to the British government, so that should his conduct ever be called into question the Confederacy might "fearlessly avow and openly justify" him as its agent.<sup>9</sup>

This letter fired Capston with enthusiasm for his work. Arriving in Dublin upon the scenes of his college days and finding the emigration from Ireland greater than for years past, he set himself to look up old friends. Soon he had a number of influential citizens, especially the newspaper men, interested in him and in his cause. These latter began the publication of daily editorials against the North and in favor of the South.<sup>10</sup> But he was not satisfied. The population of Dublin was after all, an urban population, and while its inhabitants were concerned over the movement that was sweeping away numbers of the Irish people, still they themselves were not so much involved in the actual emigration. He must meet the people of the Southern and South-western farming districts—it was these for the most part who were falling victims to the Federal wiles. He determined, therefore, to work his way slowly through Limerick and Galway to Cork the great center of the American exodus.<sup>11</sup> Hotze misinter-

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<sup>9</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Benjamin to Capston, July 3, 1863.

<sup>10</sup>Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, October 1, 1863. The papers he thus managed to influence were: the *Dublin Irish Times*, *Freeman's Journal*, *Morning News*, *Catholic Telegraph*.

<sup>11</sup>Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, April 14, 1864.

preted this move. He wrote to him rather sharply on October 2, 1863, instructing him to secure a fixed residence as headquarters. "Travelling to and fro between the East and West of Ireland," Hotze wrote, "is necessarily expensive, and our finances in Europe are in such condition that even small sums become important."<sup>12</sup>

It is interesting to learn from this letter that the Confederate leaders at Richmond evidently expected Capston's mission to be but a matter of a few months' duration. The money given to him before leaving Richmond, £273.70, was just enough to pay his passage over and back and to allow him two months' salary. Small expense sums, as for printing, were to be secured from Hotze.<sup>13</sup> Hotze reminds him that the balance of the money left on deposit at London is greatly reduced and that care must be exercised in incurring expense. "I am sure," he continues, "if you could see as I do the precarious money circumstances in which we are, you would most cordially agree."<sup>14</sup>

Capston called on the various parish priests in the districts through which he passed. It was easy to secure their cooperation, as one and all deplored the dwindling of their flocks through emigration. Many of these priests, under the leadership of Mr. Knox, an Irish Member of Parliament, were agitating the "tenant-right" question in the hope that if the bill were passed it would act as a block to the exodus.<sup>15</sup> To help the priests in their remonstrances with the people Capston supplied them with samples of letters from disillusioned young Irishmen who had emigrated to America.<sup>16</sup> The situation was so acute in Limerick that the Bishop had called a meeting of the clergy "to devise some speedy and certain way to prevent the exodus of the people from the

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<sup>12</sup>Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Capston, October 2, 1863.

<sup>13</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Capston, October 2, 1863, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 28, September 5, 1863, Benjamin to Capston, July 3, 1863.

<sup>14</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Capston, October 2, 1863.

<sup>15</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, October 1, 1863. "Tenant-Right" was a measure designed to secure for tenants the right not to have their rents raised arbitrarily at the expiration of their term of lease.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.* For an interesting example of such a letter see Pickett Papers Enclosure in letter of Capston to Benjamin, August 24, 1864.



country” and this conference Capston was cordially invited to address.<sup>17</sup>

While in Galway he succeeded in winning the favor of the Galway *Vindicator* and the Galway *Press* for the South.<sup>18</sup> There, too, he heard rumors concerning the activities of a certain Mr. Feeny, an Irish-American and a former native of Loughrea, but not having been able to establish anything definite against the man, he was forced to let the matter drop.<sup>19</sup> Arriving at Queens-town early in November, 1863, Capston met Dowling and was able to lend him support in the Kearsarge affair.<sup>20</sup> The men took a strong liking to one another. They discussed their experiences and exchanged information. Capston found that Dowling was very popular in the port. He had secured the support of the Cork *Examiner* for the Confederacy and when American members of the Fenian Brotherhood, whose purpose was “to spirit away the Irish to swell the ranks of the Federal army” had disembarked at Queenstown, Dowling with the aid of the clergy and many of his friends had had them driven out of town.<sup>21</sup> Capston took such a liking to Dowling that he wrote to Benjamin immediately after their first meeting reminding the Secretary of State that before he had left Richmond, he had been promised a colaborer and that he was now convinced that there could be no man better calculated to assist him in his mission than Dowling.<sup>22</sup>

Queenstown was a port of embarkation in Ireland. Peasants from every county came here seeking passage to the land of promise and of opportunity. Often they would arrive days and weeks before the emigrant-vessels were scheduled to leave. As a result a hive of cheap hotels and boarding houses had sprung up in the city. To these Capston now turned his attention. Some weeks before he had secured Hotze’s permission to have handbills printed.<sup>23</sup> These he had used with effect in his journey southward.

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<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.* and Capston to Benjamin, January 28, 1864.

<sup>19</sup>Library of Congress, Div. of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, October 1, 1863.

<sup>20</sup>Library of Congress, Div. of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Dowling to Benjamin, November 25, 1863.

<sup>21</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, November 9, 1863.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, October 1, 1863.



The rest were now distributed under every roof that might house a prospective emigrant. Certainly, in so Catholic a country as Ireland they were enough to make even a stout heart quail. "Caution to Emigrants"—so ran the heading, and under that in bold-faced type the startling disclosures—"Persecution of Catholics in America! The Tabernacle Overthrown! The Blessed Host Scattered on the Ground! Benediction Veil Made a Horse Cover Of! All the Sacred Vessels Carried Off! The Monuments of the Dead Defaced! The Priest Imprisoned and afterwards Exposed on an Island to Alligators and Snakes! His Home Robbed of Everything!" The poster told of the outrages committed against Catholics in the United States, both before the war in the fury of the Know Nothing Movement and during the war by the soldiers of the Northern armies in their moments of victory. "The moment that an emigrant ship reaches the port of America," so the poster said, "the unpretending emigrant, full of warm and friendly feelings to the Country, is persuaded by interested agents to declare his intention to become a citizen, (as they term it, a Real American); after his declaration being made, according to the late Act of Congress, he comes under the Conscription Law.

"And no alternative is left. He becomes a Soldier. In forty-eight hours he is landed in the swamps of the Carolinas or on the Sand Bars of Charleston. Then to imbrue his hands in the Blood of His Countrymen, and fight for a people that has the greatest antipathy to his birth and creed."

As a parting shot the emigrant was reminded of the fate of General Meagher's Irish Brigade, five thousand strong, who perished on the field at Fredericksburg and the contemptuous comment of a New York paper when it was proposed to reorganize the Brigade, that "they could afford to lose a few thousand of the scum of the Irish."<sup>24</sup>

Emigration fell off considerably at the port of Queenstown during the early Winter of 1863-64.<sup>25</sup> But Capston and Dowling were suddenly stirred into action late in January, by the discovery that the same Mr. Feeny who had caused suspicion in the mind of Cap-

<sup>24</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, November 9, 1863. Enclosure.

<sup>25</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, December 25, 1863; Dowling to Benjamin, January 28, 1864.

ston in the fall was very actively engaged in Galway in inducing men to accept free passage to America with the promise of work on the railroads. He had already had some success in his native Loughrea—two hundred and fifty men having signed with him. He had now begun in Galway and two hundred more had accepted his offer. His story was that he had been sent to Ireland by an American railway construction company to engage as many laborers as he could, who would be able to work on railroad construction. The conditions of the engagement were that on arrival at Galway of the vessel by which the men were to be conveyed, a sum of two pounds per head was to be paid them to assist in procuring an outfit and eight shillings a day were promised them at their destination. Each, however, was to have two shillings a day taken from his pay until he should have reimbursed his employers for the cost of passage and of his clothes and food. Feeny's actions and methods had seemed suspicious to the authorities at Loughrea and he was therefore seized and questioned. No charge, however, could be brought against him, so he was released.<sup>26</sup>

Lieutenant Capston now proposed to Hotze that he be allowed to follow up this case. Hotze was agreeable enough, but confessed that he was entirely out of funds for the Irish mission. He offered, however, to advance Capston money out of his own allowance should the facts in the case seem to warrant the expense.<sup>27</sup> The matter was accordingly dropped, though Lord Howard was afterward to single out Feeny for attack in his memorable speech on Irish emigration in the House of Commons on the following July 28.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, January 28, 1864. Enclosure.

<sup>27</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Capston, February 5, 1864.

<sup>28</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, August 24, 1864. Enclosure.

### III

#### JOHN BANNON

While Capston and Dowling were busy in the South of Ireland during the late Fall and early Winter of 1863 watching the comings and goings at the port of Queenstown, a new Confederate agent arrived at Dublin in the person of Father John Bannon, an Irish-American priest, who had been Catholic chaplain to the Confederate forces of Missouri. Father Bannon was a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. He had gone to America ten years before and had been stationed successively at the Cathedral, the Church of the Immaculate Conception and St. John's, all in the archiepiscopal city. He was a very popular priest, in manner dignified and reserved, yet pleasant and friendly, and a brilliant talker.<sup>1</sup>

Secretary Benjamin had promised Lieutenant Capston a co-laborer in his mission and the choice of the Confederate leaders fell upon Father Bannon, who, like the celebrated Father Abram J. Ryan, had always been a staunch friend and supporter of the Confederacy. It was felt at Richmond that a Catholic priest, a native of Ireland, could probably do more to influence the Irish people in the matter of emigration and Federal enlistment than any mere layman, however capable. The regard and respect of the average Irishman for his priest was proverbial even among the worst enemies of the Church in America. Father Bannon was therefore transferred on September 1, 1863, from the army to special service in the State Department and arrived at London late in October, 1863, as confidential Irish agent of the Confederacy.<sup>2</sup>

He reported to Hotze upon his arrival in London and then proceeded to Dublin, where he established himself at the Angel Hotel.<sup>3</sup> This was not a haphazard choice. The Angel Hotel was a typical European hostelry of the middle nineteenth century. It was situ-

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<sup>1</sup>For an account of Father Bannon see Dr. Stock's Presidential Address quoted above. See also references in Rev. John Rothensteiner's *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis*, *index*.

<sup>2</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 32, November 21, 1863.

<sup>3</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 31, October 31, 1863; Bannon to Sec't. of State, November 17, 1863.

ated near the Smithfield market and was the favorite resort of the farmers, the parish priests, the politicians and the gossips of the surrounding countryside.<sup>4</sup> The affairs of the world were here discussed with a leisureliness and finality that mocked the seriousness of Parliament. The appearance at the Angel Hotel of such a personality as that of Father John Bannon, especially in his capacity of an accredited representative of the Confederate States of America and as an ertswile officer in its army was bound to create a stir and send hurrying thither for the latest American news representatives from all the classes he was most desirous to influence. He talked with them all, priests and people, with the literary men and newspaper scribes, with the politicians, the farmers and laborers. He gave the Southern version of the causes of the war in America. He exposed the Federal agents and added to Capston's account of the treatment accorded to Catholics in the North.

His first letter to Benjamin reflects this coffee-shop type of discussion on the subject of the emigration and enlistment, and the naïve, but shrewd logic of the arguments can scarcely have been perused by the Secretary without some amusement even in the midst of his real concern over the Irish question. The philosophical essayists, said Bannon, would try to explain the emigration by ethnology; the politicians attribute it to the mal-administration of the English government, but the farmers and local clergy will tell you it is due to only one thing, hunger and want, brought on by the failure of the crops in '61 and '62. The whole country, however, he assures the Secretary, is up in arms over it. Catholics and Protestants alike deplore the fatal drainage. Yet there is little that can be done. England is alert to thwart every attempt at direct enlistment; nevertheless, the exodus continues. "I can do nothing now," he writes, "the engines are at work and beyond my control or that of any power until the subject shall have been exhausted by discussion, and in the hands of these volunteer allies, I leave our interests for the present."<sup>5</sup> This letter, however,

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<sup>4</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Sec't. of State, No. 1, November 17, 1863.

<sup>5</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Sec't. of State, No. 1, November 17, 1863.

despite Bannon's pessimistic attitude, proved one thing, that the agitation begun by the South against Federal recruiting was beginning to have its effect especially upon official England.

The ensuing week seems to have increased his feeling of helplessness. He wrote to Benjamin on November 22:

Every day proves from the futility of the efforts made by clergy and laity, that this emigration cannot be stayed. The population is being diminished at the rate of fifteen to eighteen thousand a month and until some other land offers the inducements and facilities of emigration presented by the Northern States the emigration cannot be diverted. . . .<sup>6</sup>

He assured the State Department that everything was being done by the Irish leaders to stem the tide, and that this being so, he failed to see how the puny efforts of one so obscure as he could be of much avail. For instance, he says, the Archbishop of Tuam, who, as a polemical and political writer, holds the same place in Ireland as Archbishop Hughes does in America, only a few days ago wrote a letter on emigration invoking the agency of government to check the tendency. "The Federals," he insists, "need no agent to encourage or direct the current which flows with the force of a torrent."<sup>7</sup>

But discouragement and a sense of futility did not drive him into idleness or deaden his sense of responsibility. Mindful of the burden his government had laid upon him, he set about with good will to see what effect his own efforts might have upon the flood. Just before his arrival in Ireland, October 28, 1863, William Smith O'Brien, one of the leaders of the Young Ireland Movement of 1848, and a man, who as Father Bannon said, filled the place of king, prime minister and parliament in the eyes of the Irish people<sup>8</sup> had sent for publication to the *United Irishman* a letter of stinging rebuke to General Thomas Francis Meagher's plea to the Irish people on behalf of the North. This letter had attracted the attention of John Martin, one of the other Irish leaders of '48, and he had written in his turn to commend the stand

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<sup>6</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 2, November 22, 1863.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, No. 6, March 9, 1864.



taken by Smith O'Brien. These two men were "the Moses and Aaron of the Irish at home and abroad" and their effect upon the people was incalculable.<sup>9</sup> Father Bannon, therefore, determined to enlist their active support for his mission. He had himself started to supply the newspapers, already influenced by Capston, with items from the *Richmond Whig* and the *New York Freeman's Journal* and he had written a letter to the *Nation* justifying the South, to which he had signed the nom-de-plume of "Sacerdos." The pen of these men would be mightier than his own. He, therefore, induced John Martin to begin a series of letters for the *Nation*, promising to supply him with all the needful data.<sup>10</sup>

But perhaps his friends of the hotel coffee-shop did not approve of his methods and offered some pertinent criticism. We find him quite suddenly turning against this mode of approaching the people, and the reason he gives is unassailable. "The effects of a newspaper correspondence," he says, "are limited to the subscribers of the paper, who are mostly well-to-do people and never reach the class which supplies the emigration. But few of the latter take a newspaper. . . . Amongst the middle and upper classes the sympathy of this country is all with us."<sup>11</sup> Whatever papers the poor can afford to buy, he says, all take their politics from the school of Meagher and Corcoran. The Federal agents and these cheap *National* papers have misguided *the people* who as a mass are ignorant of the crux of the question and are captivated by the éclat of Meagher's career, and the advocacy of Bishop Hughes for the Northern party."<sup>12</sup>

He, therefore, reverted to Capston's idea of the circular that could be thrust into the hand of the emigrant or the poster that could be tacked up in the boarding-houses of the seaport cities. He requested of Hotze permission to reprint his own letter and those of O'Brien and Martin in this form.<sup>13</sup>

This permission Hotze gladly accorded him. To the letters originally contemplated he added another written to the *Nation*

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<sup>9</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 2, November 22, 1863.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 4, January 19, 1864.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 2, November 22, 1863; Bannon to Benjamin, No. 3, December 15, 1863.

on September 30, 1863, by John Mitchel. Mitchel was another of the leaders of the rebellion of '48 and like Meagher had found his way after those troublous days to America. After several years residence in New York he had settled in Virginia and had become an ardent journalistic supporter of the Confederacy. Two of his sons died on the battlefield in defense of the South. He had written this letter in September, 1863, to the *Nation* imploring the Irish people not to project themselves unjustly into a war against a young nation like themselves struggling for freedom.<sup>14</sup>

The letter had been sympathetically received by the Irish people and later, in January, 1864, we find Father Bannon urging Benjamin to have Mitchel write more in order that such letters might be used in the Confederate campaign. Father Bannon wrote: "A series of letters from Mitchel to the Irish people could not fail to produce the desired effect, for however people may differ him (sic) regarding his Irish politics, all parties agree to regard him as an *honest man*, and his word—unlike Meagher's would not be spoken without effect."<sup>15</sup>

Two thousand copies of this poster were printed. One thousand were sent to Capston for distribution in Queenstown, Father Bannon requesting Capston to see to it that every able-bodied young man who presented himself in that port for embarkation be given a copy. Five hundred more were sent to Galway.<sup>16</sup>

In the meantime, at Father Bannon's request, the Confederate State Department sent a representative, A. Dudley Mann, to the Holy See to try to induce Pope Pius IX, to interest himself in the situation in Ireland and by some authoritative word, as the Father of Christendom, put a stop to the emigration there. The real object of the mission was of course disguised. On October 18, 1862, the Pope had written to Archbishop John Hughes of New York, and to Archbishop John Mary Odin, of New Orleans, begging them to use every effort to bring about a peaceful solution of the difficulties in the States.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 3, December 15, 1863 with enclosure.

<sup>15</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 4, January 19, 1864.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup>*Records of the American Catholic Historical Society*, "Some Civil War Documents, A.D., 1862-1864. Pope Pius IX and President Davis." Vol. XIV, 1903, Phila., pp. 264-274.

Ambrose Dudley Mann, one of the original Confederate commissioners to England and at this time commissioner to Belgium, was chosen by President Davis to convey his thanks to the Pope in the name of the Confederacy, for these letters exhibiting so kindly an interest in American affairs. Pope Pius IX had responded through the agency of Mann to the President's message on December 3, 1863, and this reply of the Pope, Father Bannon determined to use in his campaign.

With Hotze's permission the letter of the Pope was reprinted in poster form. It was preceded by the Pope's letter to Archbishop Hughes and President Davis' letter to the Pope and followed by a long commentary from the pen of "Sacerdos."<sup>18</sup>

Early in January, 1864, twelve thousand copies of this poster were mailed out to the parish priests of Ireland, two copies being sent to every priest. Accompanying the posters was a personal letter to the priest. Father Bannon said that relying upon the interest which every Catholic priest feels in the welfare of the Catholic Church throughout the whole world, and especially upon the interest which, as Irish pastors, they must feel in the well-being of the Irish Catholic emigrant in America, he had presumed to send the enclosed posters for their inspection. He averred that the charges lodged against the Northern party and the Northern soldiers in the United States for the unredressed and uncensured outrages perpetrated against the Catholic Church, her priests and people were only a summary of the whole catalogue of such things, as they could verify for themselves by referring to the files of the *New York Freeman's Journal* or the *Metropolitan Record*. That no such accusations could be brought against the South he said he could testify to from his own two years' experience with the army in the field and from the statement made by a Catholic Bishop in his regular report to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda. Father Bannon testified that he had himself conveyed this letter safely out of the Confederacy and transmitted it to Rome at the same time as President Davis sent his letter to the Pope. Should the priest desire, therefore, to cooperate in counteracting "the malign influence of the Yankee agents, engaged in misinforming, deceiving

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<sup>18</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 5, February 17, 1864.

and luring the enthusiastic and credulous youth of Ireland into the Yankee army, to fight against their fellow-countrymen in the Southern ranks and subjugate the foreigners' friends and the defenders of civil and religious liberty in America" he could do this by posting one of these circulars in the neighborhood of his church for perusal on the following Sunday.<sup>19</sup>

The poster itself, almost three feet square, with its caption in bold black-faced type: *The Letters of Pope Pius IX on the War in America*, was well adapted to attract the instant attention of the devout Irish Catholics on their way to Mass. The letters of the Pope and that of Jefferson Davis were impressive, but the facts disclosed in the comments of "Sacerdos" upon them must have been little short of startling to the poor Irish peasants many of whom had relations and friends in the States. To a great extent this "Address to the Catholic Clergy and People of Ireland" reiterated and enlarged upon Capston's charges of the month previous against the North. After pointing out that in the Holy Father's appeal to Archbishop Hughes and in the former's "prompt and generous recognition of the President of the Confederate States" there was proof that the Holy See regarded the struggle in America as a contest between the remnant of Christian civilization yet living in the South and the all-domineering materialism of the age personified in the amalgamation of the German and Yankee infidels in the North. Bannon went on to justify the Confederate secession by citing the example of America's rebellion against England in 1776. Today, he said, the usurpation of New England is every bit as blighting to the Union as the former oppression of Great Britain. The only object of the war, he said, is that a nation of Yankee *manufacturers* may enrich themselves by the plunder of the *farmers* and planters of the South. The war, he declared, is not for the restoration of the *old fraternal union of the past*, it is a war between *the cross and the crescent*—the crescent in this case being *the dollar*—*a war between the materialism and infidelity of the North and the remnant of Christian civilization yet dominant in the South*.

The *old Union*, he claimed, from the days of Washington

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<sup>19</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 6, March 9, 1864 with enclosure.



flourished and throve under the guidance of honorable *Southern* gentlemen and to them Catholics and Irishmen in America owed their citizenship and the preservation of equal rights. But to the *new* Union Party now ruling, Irish American Catholics owe the burning of the convent in Charlestown and the destruction of their churches in Philadelphia. To the same party they owe the bitter scorn, hatred and malevolence stirred up against them by the Northern Nativists in 1854, when their homes were burned and they themselves shot down in the streets of Brooklyn, Cincinnati, Louisville and St. Louis. Since the war began Federal soldiers have rifled and violated their churches in Missouri, Virginia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida and other Southern States. If it be objected that Meagher and other Catholics held high commissions in the Union army and that surely they would not be found fighting on the side of such a cause, they must understand that no priest or decent Irishman in America would ever associate the name of "Catholic" or of "Gentleman" with such adventurers. Moreover, the Irish serving in the Federal army could not help themselves. They had been decoyed into the service. Irish officers were appointed merely to entice their fellow-countrymen to enlist under their leadership.

Who, he asks, are these Yankees? The descendants of Cromwell and his followers. They persecuted the Quakers and hanged witches. Under the name of the American Party, Nativists and Know Nothings they attacked the Catholics and tried to take from them their franchise. Like wild beasts, he continues, they hounded Archbishop Bedini through the Northern cities and burned him in effigy in the public square of Cincinnati. In the course of the war, they have shot down women and children in the streets of St. Louis, plundered chalices and ciboria from the tabernacles of Frederick and Washington counties, Missouri; trampled the Blessed Sacrament under their feet and made horse covers from the Sacred vestments. During a mission at Hannibal, Missouri, they drove the congregation into the streets and at Richmond, Louisiana, they turned the church into a stable for cavalry.

Who, on the other hand, are the men of the South? The friends of the foreigner and the Catholic. They are the descendants of Spanish Catholics who settled in Florida, along the Gulf Coast

and in Mexico; of French Catholics who came to Louisiana; of the Irish Catholic settlers of Maryland and Kentucky. In the Southern cities, Catholics are welcomed. Nowhere does one hear them termed "beggarly, ignorant papists and low foreigners" as they are invariably called in the North. It was the South which crushed Know Nothingism in the election of 1856, when if a single Southern State had voted with the Northern party Catholics and foreigners would have sunk below the level of the Negro, whose color and caste were less a crime in the eyes of the Yankee than the brogue and faith of the Irish Catholic.

"As a priest of the Catholic Church," Father Bannon concluded, "I am anxious to see the desires of the Holy Father realized speedily, and therefore have taken this means to lay before you the expression of his sentiments on the subject of the American War, knowing that no Irish Catholic will persevere in the advocacy of an aggression condemned by His Holiness."<sup>20</sup>

Father Bannon was not left long in suspense as to the effect on the Irish people of this broadside against the North. A few days after its reception by the clergy, a very prominent ecclesiastic died and priests and bishops from all the surrounding counties came to pay their respects at his obsequies. The sole topic of conversation was the American War and the drastic charges which Father Bannon had levelled against the North. Father Bannon himself was present and became the target of eager questions and discussions. Were these things true? Did the Pope really condemn the war? Some of the priests admitted that they had not even heard before of the Pope's letter to Archbishop Hughes, nor of the bigotry of which Bannon accused the Northern army. Fortune favored Father Bannon. It so happened that an American priest "of much influence and high position" had arrived from the States but a few days before and attended the funeral. He supported Father Bannon's published statements, supplying many more particulars regarding the hostility manifested by the Union army toward Catholicism since the beginning of the war. His testimony was overwhelming since he himself was the victim of

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<sup>20</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, No. 4, January 19, 1864 with enclosure.

some of the very outrages which Father Bannon had specified by name and locality.<sup>21</sup>

Every priest and Bishop present returned to his parish or diocese a witness to the truth of Father Bannon's statements and a willing convert to the cause of the South. The Bishops, especially declared themselves in favor of the Confederacy and endorsed Father Bannon's campaign and the methods by which he was carrying it on.<sup>22</sup>

The impression made upon the Bishops and priests was further strengthened two or three weeks later by the arrival from Canada of a pamphlet from the Bishop of Toronto. His Lordship addressed one to every Bishop in Ireland and therein confirmed all the charges Father Bannon had made against the North regarding the Catholic Church.<sup>23</sup> Emboldened by this public and unforeseen clerical demonstration of friendliness and willingness to cooperate in their efforts, Hotze and Bannon had seven thousand more copies of the circular printed in case there might be some corner of the country to which their propaganda had not yet penetrated. The total cost of the project was £38.13.0. Hotze at first had contemplated but four thousand copies, one to each priest. It was Father Bannon himself, at the suggestion of some of his friends, who decided to have two printed for every priest, intending to bear the expense of the extra printing out of his own salary.<sup>24</sup> Of this, however Hotze would not hear. He gave vent to his enthusiasm for the work accomplished by Father Bannon in a despatch to the State Department on March 12, 1863:

You will doubtless see with pleasure the evidence afforded by the *Times* article enclosed in separate envelope, of the judicious selection of the Irish agent there referred to. This agent, whose report I herewith transmit, has certainly proved himself admirably well qualified for his duties; he has tempered a noiseless industry and devoted zeal with sound discretion. His funds are now reduced to little over two months' salary, and I respectfully recommend that an additional appro-

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<sup>21</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 5, February 17, 1864.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 8, May 28, 1864.

<sup>24</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 5, Feb. 17, 1864.

priation be made by you for his support and for the contingent expenses at the same rate as heretofore, in the disbursement of which he has exhibited commendable economy. In the meanwhile, while waiting for your instructions, I have, to relieve him from any embarrassment, taken the responsibility of assuming on my account, the contingent expenses heretofore incurred by him, some fifty odd pounds. I doubt not that this will meet your approval.<sup>25</sup>

The January poster opened up a new avenue of approach for Father Bannon. A few of the priests whose congregations had been dwindling fast due to the emigration now wrote to him in February requesting him to come and address their people at length upon the dangers to be incurred in the New World. Three such invitations reached him in the first two weeks of February. These invitations he gladly accepted, hoping that more requests would come when other priests learned of his presence in their neighborhood.<sup>26</sup>

The remaining weeks of February, therefore, were spent in a tour of the country. He visited many of the priests and lectured on the American War four times.<sup>27</sup>

The tour revealed the effects of the Confederate campaign. Everywhere, with few exceptions, the parish-priests had become the friends and supporters of the Confederacy. And the signs of their influence upon the people were unmistakable. As one Irish peasant remarked to Father Bannon, "We who were all praying for the North at the opening of the war, would now willingly fight for the South if we could get there."<sup>28</sup>

Father Bannon, however, would not take the whole credit for this change of sentiment. His activity, he told Benjamin, effected it only in part. There had been other causes at work. For one thing, General Meagher's conduct at Fredericksburg had undermined and dissipated Irish confidence in his representations. The Irish priests, he assured Benjamin, had never approved of Meagher, but Archbishop Hughes' warm advocacy of the North had had an

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<sup>25</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 38, March 12, 1864.

<sup>26</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, No. 6, March 9, 1864.

<sup>27</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, No. 6, March 9, 1864.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*



effect upon them. His subsequent inactivity in the Northern cause throughout the last Summer and up to the time of his death puzzled them and left many in suspense as to the merits of the American quarrel. They now thought they saw in this publication of the Pope's letter the explanation of the New York prelate's later silence, and this decided the wavering sympathies of many of the priests who however much they had admired the heroism of the South, had yet been doubtful of the justice of its cause.<sup>29</sup>

Other factors in this change of sentiment from North to South were: the gross and extravagant misrepresentations of the Northern press, which belied itself and disgusted its readers; the letters continually pouring into Ireland from disillusioned friends and relatives who had accepted the chance to emigrate; and the influence of the Catholic Northern papers themselves, especially the New York *Metropolitan Record* and the New York *Freeman's Journal*, which were now being received in every parish in Ireland and which bore out the truth of the statements made by Capston and Bannon.<sup>30</sup>

The precautions which the Federal agents were now taking likewise added to the distrust of the North and deterred many young men from accepting the "free tickets" which before they would have gladly accepted. Warnings, too, came from their friends who left Dublin or Liverpool in the previous Summer and Autumn. Some had been tricked into taking an oath which made them liable to the draft after landing. Others had had to pledge themselves on the way over not to work for any other party in America except for those who had furnished the free transportation. They found, upon their arrival, that these employers deliberately kept them idle, so that but one alternative was left them, enlist or starve. Father Bannon wrote:

All these facts are now well known by the youth of the country who though willing and eager to go to America are very unwilling to enter the American army and show less alacrity to accept the free tickets than before the revelation of the consequences involved in the conditions attached.

The requirement of an oath has convinced the young men

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<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

of the country that something more than labor on American public works is required from the free emigrant and the known treachery of which they have learned from their friends who accepted free tickets has rendered them suspicious of the Federal agents.<sup>31</sup>

From what Father Bannon could see little more remained to be done, except perhaps to enforce by personal testimony in lectures and addresses what "the parish-priests everywhere advocate in favor of our claims on Catholic sympathy and forbearance."<sup>32</sup>

The Confederate mission to Ireland had been in existence less than a year. It was working under almost insuperable difficulties, with few agents and little money, against a powerful Federal organization well-staffed, well-financed. Yet Father Bannon was able to report to Benjamin that within that short time a great change of heart on the part of the Irish toward the South was noticeable:

The people sympathize with the South, the priesthood advocate the Southern cause, and little more is required than to allow the leaven to work, and should the Federal and Confederate recruiting officers be allowed to enter the field of competition for recruits within a month from now the Southern cause would attract four-fifths of the fighting material of the country.<sup>33</sup>

In March he launched forth upon another lecture tour<sup>34</sup> but first sent out another poster addressed to the young men of Ireland. Incorporated with his own address were reprints of the previous letters of John Mitchel, William Smith O'Brien and John Martin. He recalled to the young men the Young Ireland Movement of 1848 and pointed out to them that the surviving patriotic leaders of that movement were all strongly in favor of the South. He branded as false Northern propaganda the report that 200,000 Irish had enlisted in the Union army, and cited figures from the *Chicago Tribune* to prove that less than 40,000 Irish were in the Federal service, and that many of these had joined the army from necessity caused by the suspension of river trade and railroad construction. He said that the North deliberately exaggerated the

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<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*

number to lead European Catholic nations to believe that the Catholic Church in America approved of the war against the South and to win the service of the Irish youth by inducing them to believe that all the Irish in America were fighting for the North. The work of enlisting, he continued, was being done by Irish, who were as willing to take a contract for a supply of Irish soldiers as of laborers, and whose only interest in the Irish was to sell their blood. The Irishman who would be the party to such a contract he branded as a base contemptible mercenary, selling himself for a pittance and swearing to do Hessian work against the people of the South.

He appealed to their consciences as Catholics, reminding them that St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Alphonsus Ligouri taught that a foreigner about to enter the military service (of another country) is bound under pain of mortal sin to inquire into the justice of the cause; that a soldier engaged in a war which he believes to be unjust cannot obtain absolution unless he is determined to procure his discharge as soon as possible and in the meantime abstain from all acts of hostility; and that a soldier who engages in a war for the sake of pay, regardless of the justice or injustice of the war is sinfully disposed and cannot receive absolution while in that state of mind, and if the war be unjust he is bound to make restitution for all injustices inflicted on the people and property of the defenders.

He would therefore remind the prospective emigrant that when he marches to the field of battle the sentence of reprobation hovers over his head as certainly as it follows the duellist to the encounter; and should he fall impenitent it will sink him to as low a depth of perdition for participation in an unjust and aggressive war, as the duellist for an unjustifiable homicide of himself or his adversary.<sup>35</sup>

During the late Winter and early Spring of 1864 Father Bannon also attempted in an indirect way to influence Parliament and official England. Hotze's new Southern Independence Association was at work daily agitating the American question in both the upper and lower Houses of Parliament; and the Government

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<sup>35</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 7, April 9, 1864. Enclosure.

was worried and badgered by the Federals on the one side and the Confederates on the other.<sup>36</sup> Bannon came to the aid of the Association, sending to every member of the two Houses who spoke in favor of the Southern cause, such clippings from Irish and American papers as he judged calculated to supply them with information and arguments on the questions of Southern rights or interests.<sup>37</sup>

This agitation in Parliament was to come to a climax in the summer of 1864 in the celebrated speech of Lord Howard on Irish Emigration, provoked by the unmasking of the activity of Mr. Feeny or Finney. The exposure of this Federal agent Bannon attributed to the influence his posters had had on the young men who emigrated in the spring of 1864.<sup>38</sup>

Mr. Feeny was the mysterious agent of a mythical American railway construction company whom Capston and Dowling had been watching closely at the turn of the year. The British authorities too had eyed him with suspicion arresting him in Loughrea because of his offer to transport peasants *gratis* to America. Nothing, however, could be proved against him at the time.<sup>39</sup> In reality, Mr. Feeny was the European agent for a certain Bostonian named Kidder, who dealt in oil, an enterprise as non-existent as Mr. Feeny's railroad, and whose real business was to supply Irish emigrants to the Union Army.

With the breaking of the Winter, Mr. Feeny had transferred his activities to Dublin, where in February he prevailed upon some hundred young men to accompany him to America for work upon the railroad. The emigrant-boat touched first at Portland, Maine, where a few of his charges eluded him or got lost. The eighty-six who remained reached Boston in the first week of March. They were taken to an old building on Bunker Hill in Charlestown. The weather was bleak and cold. Here liquor was freely distrib-

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<sup>36</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 38, March 12, 1864.

<sup>37</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, Note 6, March 9, 1864.

<sup>38</sup>Library of Congress, Div. of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 7, April 9, 1864. Also; Bannon to Benjamin, No. 8, May 28, 1864.

<sup>39</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 8, May 28, 1864 with enclosure. Also, Capston to Benjamin, October 1, 1863.



uted among them and they were informed that the work for which they had been engaged was not ready but that they need not remain idle. If they chose, they could enlist in the army at once. The young men, however, were not so easily taken in. Remembering the warnings of Father Bannon and of their pastors at home, they refused. On the morrow they found themselves without food. They had no money. The owner of the building told them they could not remain there but must seek other lodging. Some strayed away, others stayed in the neighborhood pestered at every turn by recruiting officers willing to show them how food and shelter might be procured. Only eight succumbed to the inducements held out by the army. Irish Americans living near and learning of the plight of the young men at last afforded succor. The incident with the real story of Feeny found its way into the columns of the *Boston Courier* on March 12, and those of the *New York Irish American* on March 19. Soon the Irish and English papers carried an account of the affair and it was not long before debate on the question reached the floor of Parliament.<sup>40</sup>

In the meantime some of Feeny's victims and their friends wrote to Ireland giving details of the outrage and alleging that the eight who enlisted were kidnapped, four of them indeed, having been drugged. The newspapers in all leading Irish cities carried the letters and Bannon determined to see to it that they were published likewise in every rural newspaper in the country.<sup>41</sup> The parish-priest of Kinsale, on a visit to America, cut an advertisement from the *Boston Herald* and mailed it for publication to the *Cork Examiner*. The advertisement read:

#### SUBSTITUTES

We can furnish substitutes every day from 9 to 1, as low as any responsible shipping house in the city.

*Only Aliens Furnished Here*

Principals liberally dealt with, and first class references given to all who wish, at

17 Tremont St.

S. A. HEATH & Co.

<sup>40</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. , May 2, 1864 with enclosure.

<sup>41</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 7, 1864.

"Only aliens furnished!" commented the Cork *Examiner*. "Only wretched Irishmen! No valuable Yankee to be sent by Messrs. Heath & Co. to receive the Confederate bullets. That firm is too patriotic no doubt to waste the lives of American citizens in a war in which only Americans are concerned. So long as they can get cheap Irishmen, so long as Irishmen can be drugged and cheated out of their liberties and sold for the use of the great butcher lying in front of Petersburg, why should Yankee gentlemen be sent to the shambles!"<sup>42</sup>

By this time Ireland was in a ferment over the startling facts which Bannon's disclosures had brought to light. What he said was being confirmed daily by the American letters and newspapers reaching Ireland. Whatever Northern sympathy there had been in Ireland in the beginning because of the great personalities of Meagher and Hughes was fast dwindling away. Father Bannon, worn out but happy, was convinced that his mission was fast nearing its end. He contemplated one last broadside to the clergy in the form of a circular carrying the letters from Feeny's corps of emigrants and a statement from General Wister of the Federal army bearing witness to the truth of the story the young men told. For the rest, he proposed to leave the matter in the hands of the clergy, now personally interested in staying the emigration and at the behest of the hierarchy using their best energies to that end.<sup>43</sup> He wrote to Benjamin in May, 1864:

Beyond the circulation of this last handbill . . . I see not what remains for me to accomplish in Ireland—Priests and Bishops are instructed on the social and moral evils awaiting the emigrant in America, they are opposed to the emigration and laboring to check it. They are informed of the mode of Federal enlistment and disgusted with the details, are warning and cautioning their people against the knavery of prigs and primps. They are the most influential class in Ireland, and have assumed the task of counteracting any future emissaries of the Federal government. My money is exhausted—my mission accomplished.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Capston to Benjamin, August 24, 1864, Enclosure.

<sup>43</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 8, May 28, 1864.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*

A few days previous to the writing of this letter, the Right Reverend Patrick N. Lynch, Catholic Bishop of Charleston, S. C., arrived in Ireland as special envoy of the Confederate States to the Vatican. He met Father Bannon and requested him to accompany him to Rome. Father Bannon, having represented to Hotze that so far as he could see, his work in Ireland was finished, was permitted to go, Hotze requesting him, nevertheless, to continue his correspondence with the Irish press and the leading members of the Irish clergy while en route and during his stay in the Holy City.<sup>45</sup>

Before concluding this account of Father Bannon and his activity, it might be well to draw attention to the quiet but consistently helpful attitude of Henry Hotze, the Confederate commercial agent at London, toward the Irish mission. Father Bannon felt and appreciated it and before he left Ireland could not forbear bringing it to the attention of the State Department. "I have to thank Mr. Hotze," he wrote, "for his kind encouragement and valuable assistance in having furnished me on many occasions with desirable information and valuable articles on subjects regarding which I had reason to doubt my competence and sufficiency."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 44, June 10, 1864.

<sup>46</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 7, April 9, 1864. Among the Pickett Papers are two letters disclosing the presence of another official Confederate agent in Ireland between the months of April and December, 1864. This man was Captain James F. Lalor, a convalescent officer of the Southern army. Why he was sent is hard to understand. To judge from the one undated letter he wrote to Benjamin he accomplished nothing beyond writing a few random articles on the South for the *Dublin Irish Times*. He seems to have been concerned merely with the good times he was having and the adulation he was receiving as a wounded hero. In that darkest hour of the South he was reminding Benjamin that should the Confederacy prove victorious, he hoped "that wonderful man, Jefferson Davis" would favor him with a consulship in his native land!

## CONCLUSION

Father Bannon's letters to the Confederate State Department reveal a definite conception on the part of the Irish agents of the purpose of the mission on which they were sent. That purpose must be borne in mind if we are to draw any valid conclusion as to the success or failure of their work. Briefly stated, the purpose of the mission was this: the Confederate agents were so to instruct the Irish people as to the nature of the war in America and as to the various wiles practiced by the Federal officers in the efforts to secure recruits for the Northern armies, that young Irish peasants, inclined to emigrate to America, might be fully on their guard against any trap laid to ensnare them in the Federal enlisting.

Irish emigration to America had increased with the war. Normally, it should not have done so. Construction work on the roads, railways and canals in America which was the objective which had beckoned to young Irishmen before the war, was to a great extent suspended. The steady continuance and even increase in the stream of emigration since the war began could be explained by the South in only one way, these young men were finding the offer of service in the Federal army with its good pay and liberal bounties an even more attractive offer than any the construction companies had hitherto made them. It was hoped that through the efforts of the Confederate agents this unnatural increase in emigration would be checked and that those who would normally come over despite the war, would be so well informed before leaving Ireland as to the trickery exercised to draw them into the Union forces, that they would be enabled to avoid these pitfalls.

This was the purpose of the Irish mission. Was its purpose accomplished?

Definite facts and figures are needed to give an adequate answer to the question. But statistics in the matter are entirely lacking. The Confederate government believed that it did realize its objective. The commendation of the State Department was extended to Bannon through Hotze in June, 1864.<sup>1</sup> On May 28, of the

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<sup>1</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 44, June 10, 1864.



same year Bannon wrote: "I see not what remains for me to accomplish in Ireland. . . . My money is exhausted—my mission accomplished."<sup>2</sup>

Hotze endorsed Bannon's conviction.<sup>3</sup>

Capston, summing up the results of the mission toward the end of that summer of 1864, reported to Benjamin: "I am satisfied when the Yankee agents come to this country to operate they will find a harder road to travel than they did twelve months ago."<sup>4</sup>

Items from various contemporary Irish newspapers on the status of the emigration in the late Spring of 1864 seem to support the contention of the Confederate agents that their agitation against the Federal recruiting had not been in vain. Thus we have the following comment from the Cork *Daily Herald* of June 4, 1864:

It gives us pleasure to be able to state that there is a considerable falling off in the number of persons seeking passages to New York by the steamers calling at Queenstown. It is known that the great rush through this port for the past few months has been for the most part, of emigrants whose passages were prepaid by friends in America, the proportion of those who emigrated at their own expense being comparatively small. The thousands who were influenced by the former inducement have been nearly all swept away westward, and those who have not yet departed quietly remain at their homes in the country till the days of sailing. . . .

After the sailing of the Edinburgh, Olympus and the City of Washington, this week, there remains but a small number of emigrants at Queenstown. Yesterday there was but twenty awaiting the next Inman steamer. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Father Bannon, moreover, maintained that the success of the mission was not to be gauged entirely from the ratio of numbers in the emigration, but also from the mental attitude with which the emigrants faced the cajolery or the insolence of the recruiting officers upon their arrival in the States. He appealed to the

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<sup>2</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 8, May 28, 1864.

<sup>3</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Hotze to Benjamin, No. 44, June 10, 1864.

<sup>4</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, August 24, 1864.

<sup>5</sup>Library of Congress, Div. of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Capston to Benjamin, June 15, 1864. Enclosure.

spirited action of Feeny's recruits in March, 1864, as a case in point and remarked that if the emigrants still go, "they are no longer allowing themselves to be duped upon arrival."<sup>6</sup>

In the absence of statistics, no definite conclusion can be drawn. The answer to the question as to the success or failure of the mission must remain one of the *dubia* of history.

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<sup>6</sup>Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts, Pickett Papers, Bannon to Benjamin, No. 7, April 9, 1864.

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## FATHER JOHN BANNON, S.J.

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Through the kindness of the Rev. Laurence J. Kenny, S.J., of the University of Detroit, and Mr. Joseph P. Morrissey, S.J., of St. Mary's College, St. Mary's, Kansas, RECORDS AND STUDIES is able to give herewith some interesting personal information about Father John Bannon, whose activities as the Agent in Ireland of the Southern Confederacy are recorded by Father Ryan, C.P., elsewhere in this volume. Father Kenny wrote to the Editor of RECORDS AND STUDIES:

Some time ago I informed one of my students in history, Mr. Francis Reynolds, S.J., that it was likely that Father Bannon might have in his possession letters from Confederate authorities, and even from the Roman Court, that would have a true historical value; and I urged him to take Father Bannon as the subject of a Master's thesis. He accepted the suggestion and was doing something on it while pursuing his Theological studies at St. Mary's, Kansas. Unfortunately while thus engaged he suffered an attack of appendicitis and a few days later died, February 17, 1936.

I wrote to Mr. Joseph P. Morrissey, S.J., asking him to examine Mr. Reynold's writings and seek for anything he might have about Father Bannon. I enclose Mr. Morrissey's reply, which I think contains material that you want. I may add these further sidelights on the topic:

St. John's Church, where Father Bannon was pastor, is at Sixteenth and Chestnut Streets, in St. Louis, not far from the Union Station, and now a most dilapidated part of the city; but it was once, and in his time, the principal Catholic church of the diocese. Father Patrick J. Ryan, later Archbishop of Philadelphia, was successor to Father Bannon there, and the church was known as the "Pro-Cathedral."

You realize that Father Bannon could not ask his Bishop's consent to join the "Rebel" forces without implicating the Bishop in "treason". The Catholic clergy in St. Louis were being watched as by hawks by the religious and political fanatics of those days.

Mr. B. M. Chambers, who knew Father Bannon intimately, and who visited him in Dublin, told me that when in Dublin, on his

way to Rome, Father Bannon, received a letter from the Holy See asking him not to come there, since "his presence would embarrass His Holiness." I believe I've given you the exact words. But this must have been after Father Bannon had already made one visit to Rome. It is strange, and unfortunate, that in Dublin they were unable to find the important letters that we hoped to secure among Father Bannon's effects.

The data found by Mr. Joseph P. Morrissey, S.J., among the papers of the late Mr. Francis Reynolds, S.J., follow:

This biographical statement is from the "Book of Novices" of the Irish Province of the Society of Jesus:

"John Bannon was born in Roosky Co. Roscommon 29 Dec 1829 . . my father only is living and in no need of my assistance. I have one brother who is in no need of my help. I was educated in Castleknock for 2 years; here I studied grammar and humanities and afterwards in Maynooth College for 6 years where I studied rhetoric logic and metaphysics and natural phil. and then 3 years theology. . . . In Castleknock I obtained distinctions in all my classes but none other in Maynooth besides having been called to write the First-Class Piece in each of my classes every year during my course. I was confirmed (sic). My health was always good. . . I have a disinclination for preaching tho' none for teaching or foreign missions. My disinclination for preaching arises principally from dislike of all offices which bring me prominently before the public. This disinclination would not extend to preaching to the poor and humble. My memory is not precise. I was received by the Genl(sic) on the 26 August 1864."

From Melbourne, Australia, Mr. Reynolds received this letter, written by one of the Jesuits who was a member of the Dublin Community with Father Bannon:

If it were possible I would be glad to give you all the details you ask for, but I regret that the opportunities which I had of obtaining information from Father Bannon were very limited. I first met Father Bannon in the year 1865 at Milltown Park when I was then a Novice in my fifth month. He joined us on January 9, 1865, and after the usual period as a postulant, some fourteen days, joined the Novices. He arrived bearded like a Pard, with a long black beard hanging over his chest, which disappeared when he entered the quarters of the Novitiate!

During the first fortnight after his admission to the Novi-

tiate he entertained us during the recreation after dinner and supper, with stories of his experiences during the War between the North and South, relating chiefly his experiences as an army chaplain. At the end of a fortnight he was brought under the usual discipline of the Novitiate and his most interesting reminiscences were cut short, not to be repeated, by the Socius of the Master of Novices.

I gathered from this that before joining the troops he had been in charge of one of the most important churches in St. Louis and this appointment he gave up to join the Confederate troops, with whose cause he was in deep sympathy, as an army chaplain.

Amongst other things which he mentioned in connection with his position as chaplain, he told me that upon one occasion when both armies were stationed and entrenched on either side of some river—perhaps the Mississippi, and he was at the extreme right of the Confederate line, he learned that an officer had been mortally wounded at the extreme left, and was anxious to see a priest. Father Bannon immediately mounted his horse and before the firing had ceased started to gallop more than a mile to the position in which the officer was stationed. His commanding figure, of course, enabled him to be recognized, and the troops on both sides, Federal and Confederate, struck by his heroism started up from their trenches, ceased firing, and cheered him loudly. The same recognition of his devotion and courage was repeated on his return journey. This story I heard from his own lips, and read it many years later in an American magazine which came into my possession. I believe he left the United States of America after the fall of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863, returned to Europe and resided with his brother, who was then living in the neighborhood of Dublin; sometime afterwards, as I have already said, he entered the Society at Milltown Park.

You ask me under what circumstances he left the States. I believe I gathered from him more than once that his chief reason for returning to Ireland was that the prominent position he held during the War made the situation so tense that he considered it advisable to return to Ireland. In what year he returned, and how long he remained in Dublin before entering the Society I do not know, and have no opportunity of ascertaining.

I regret that I am unable to give you any more definite information although in later life I had many opportunities of meeting Father Bannon in one or other of our houses in the Irish Province, and especially during the years in which he was



Superior of our chief Church in Dublin, St. Francis Xavier, Upper Gardiner Street.

In another letter from Dublin, Father John McElean, S.J., says:

Father Bannon, who remained till his dying day strongly Southern and anti-Northern, was P.P. in St. Louis and so popular with his flock that they built a church for him and called it St. John's after his patron.

That (so far as I can find out) he never revealed even to his nearest relations the contents of the despatch which it is said he bore to Europe to some influential personage, whose name he never revealed.

That what happened at sea was that the boat in which he was proceeding to Europe was pursued by a warship belonging to the Northern States but escaped and that if it had been captured his life would have been in danger.

That at Rome (which as I have already written to you he certainly went) he made a retreat of which we can only guess the purport inasmuch as it led to his application to Fr. General to be admitted to the Society, which request was acceded to by Fr. General at the date already mentioned.

Even to his closest friends in Ireland Fr. Bannon never revealed the contents of that despatch. A close friend and relation of his told me today that his brother who survived him did not know of it, for otherwise she could not account for his brother's never having told her during Fr. Bannon's last years, and his own, when she was in continual and intimate relations with both.

Father Bannon was born, as stated above on December 29, 1829, at Rooskey, County Roscommon, whither his mother had gone from Dublin on a visit to an invalid sister. When he died on the morning of July 14, 1913, the *Dublin Telegraph* of that evening published the following notice about him. It was headed "A Famous Irish Jesuit, Chaplain in American War."

The Community of the Jesuit Fathers in Upper Gardiner Street have lost, within a comparatively short time, some of their best known and most distinguished members. They had to deplore the deaths of Father Nicholas Walsh, Father John Naughton, Father John Hughes and Father Matthew Russell, four men of great eminence and distinction, each in his own sphere, who added lustre to their Order and whose services to the Church and their country in their varied lines of apostolic activity cannot soon be forgotten. And now another name as illustrious is added to the list. The Rev. John Bannon,



after two years of inactivity, of sufferings most patiently borne, passed away in the early hours of this morning. His death had not been unexpected, but his calm endurance and powerful vitality sustained him to the end, retaining his consciousness and interest in life up till a few hours before he passed away.

Father Bannon was a man of no ordinary gifts. He was a personality of massive character, with a keen intellect, and a mind well stored from his world-wide experience and extensive reading in theology and literature of the day. Add to this a commanding presence which compelled reverence and admiration, especially from those over whom his influence was more immediately felt, and the possession of a voice of peculiar sweetness and power, and he stood out as a man fully equipped as a pulpit orator of the very first rank, with a force and charm rarely equalled. He had a vast experience of life, garnered in many lands. Connected by family ties with Westmeath (he was a cousin of Dr. Higgins, Bishop of Ballarat), his early years were passed in Dublin where in due time he passed on to Maynooth College, where, after a distinguished course, he was ordained priest by Cardinal Cullen in 1853, and he used to recount with pride that he was the first priest ordained by that eminent Churchman. After his ordination he came under the influence of Archbishop Kendrick, of St. Louis to whom he volunteered for work in America.

During the twelve years preceding the great Civil War he led the active and full life of a parochial missionary in St. Louis with a zeal and energy which are not forgotten. The stress of events led him to cast in his lot with the Southern Army, to whose memory he was ever loyal and true, and as chaplain to the Confederates he went through all the hardships and sacrifices of the campaign, saw all its phases, faced all its dangers, until its final stages ended in peace.

The vicissitudes of life led him back to Europe, where in 1864, on his return from a visit to Rome, he joined the Jesuit Order as a Novice in Milltown Park, being then thirty-five years of age and in the full flush of his power and usefulness. After his noviceship he was sent to Louvain for some further years of theological study, and, returning to Ireland he was appointed to the Missionary staff. Few priests were better known than he was during the years when, as companion of Father Robert Healy and Father Fortescue his apostolic labours had for their field almost every diocese in Ireland. After years of arduous toil in the Missionary field many positions of trust in the Order were committed by

his superiors to him in Belvedere, Tullabeg, University College, and at length he was appointed Superior of St. Francis Xavier's in 1884. Here for upwards of thirty years he laboured with an ardour and energy characteristic of his powerful will and kindly heart. During all these years his work of predilection was the formation and direction of his great Sodality for Commercial Young Men. To this work he devoted a zeal and energy which were only equalled by the devotedness and affection of those for whom he so unselfishly laboured. Many will have cause to regret in his loss a true friend, a generous benefactor, a wise and comforting adviser. But to his brothers in religion, to those who knew him in the intimacy of his daily life, his memory will remain as that of a man of deeply religious feeling, of profound humility and simplicity of character and, added to great strength of will, a heart as tender as a mother's.

The Rev. John Rothensteiner in his History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis says:

On November 4, 1858, John Bannon assumed charge of St. John's Church. . . . Father Bannon, who until then had been pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church, was transferred to St. John's for the purpose of erecting a church suitable to the position of the Coadjutor Bishop Duggan who was to take up his residence at the new St. John's. . . . The coming of Father Bannon met no kindly reception; but courage did not forsake the youthful pastor and finally he triumphed over all opposition. . . . It was dedicated on November 4, 1860, by Archbishop Kendrick. But neither Bishop Duggan nor Father Bannon long enjoyed the use of the stately basilica, Bishop Duggan being appointed to the See of Chicago, 1859, and Father John Bannon resigning his rectorship of St. John's after the fall of Camp Jackson in 1861 to join the Confederate Army as chaplain. Archbishop Patrick J. Ryan, on the occasion of his own leavetaking from his beloved church of St. John graciously and tenderly expressed his affection for him who built the church and was his personal friend.

He built this church and having completed it and being so deeply attached to it, as a priest will be to a church for which he has begged and for which he has fought, loving it tenderly, and loving with that great heart of his, he sacrificed all, and without hesitation left everything; because he heard that there were Catholic young men of this city in the Confederate army without a chaplain to minister to them who might fall in battle at any moment. He risked his life cross-

ing the lines, was for a time pursued but with the same high motive and sense of duty and self-sacrificing charity for the young men whom he knew and loved, he made this sacrifice and left an imperishable record of his personal courage and devotedness to the great cause. Twice did the commanding general order him off the field and threaten him with arrest because he did not keep within the proper lines when someone had fallen among the rushing balls in the midst of the greatest danger.—*Vol. II, pp. 99-100.*

When Father John Bannon left his newly frescoed church of St. John without any formality of leave-taking, the Archbishop simply appointed Father Ring as his successor. "Father Bannon has gone South," said the bearer of a letter to the Archbishop. "I have heard so," came the quiet answer. "And he has left this letter for your Grace," added the gentleman. "Keep it," laconically replied the Archbishop.—*Vol. II, p. 213.*

# THE SLAVERY QUESTION IN CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS, 1850-1865

BY CUTHBERT EDWARD ALLEN, O.S.B., A.B.

## PREFACE

The purpose of this dissertation, which was submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of the Catholic University of America in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, is to present the opinion of two Catholic editors in the great slavery controversy prior to the Civil War, as published in their newspapers, the *Freeman's Journal* of New York City and the *Catholic Mirror* of Baltimore. Each paper can be considered at that time as a representative Catholic journal of the North and South respectively. The years 1850 to 1865 are chosen as outside dates because during that period the slavery question became acute, reaching its climax in the War between the States.

It will be seen that, whenever they treat the question of slavery, these two Catholic editors make an essential distinction between the slave-trade which they always condemned, and the domestic system which they tolerated as an unavoidable economic evil. Both realized that an immediate abolition of the latter would mean a collapse of the whole social structure of the South, and the practical abandonment of thousands of helpless beings incapable of providing for themselves. To determine the attitude of these two Catholic editors toward the Southern institution, especially as they expressed themselves in their editorials has been the sole object of this study.

An increasing appreciation of newspapers is apparent in many recent historical studies. Since they are replete with information an effort has been made to ascertain to a limited extent Catholic editorial opinion by a thorough survey of these two papers. They express a Catholic sentiment, and present a picture of Catholic life and interests in their columns.

So far, little has been done in the way of a general history of Catholic American life based on material obtained from the news-



papers such as has been done for American history by James Bach McMaster in his *History of the People of the United States*. The importance of such historical research is emphasized by Lucy M. Salmon in her study: *The Newspaper and the Historian*. Unfortunately, there is no study dealing with the Catholic attitude toward slavery. This dissertation is an attempt to complement other researches in Catholic history of the pre-Civil War period. Notable among such studies are R. J. Murphy "The Catholic Church during the Civil War Period" (*The American Catholic Historical Society Records*), and J. T. Gillard, S.S.J., *The Catholic Church and the American Negro*. The method employed in this work is a direct one. Many editorial extracts have been given since they express themselves best in their original form.

The writer is grateful to the Most Rev. Vincent G. Taylor, O.S.B., Abbot-Ordinary of Belmont, N. C., and to the Community of Belmont Abbey for the privilege of graduate study at the Catholic University of America. To the Right Reverend Mgr. Peter Guilday, under whose direction this dissertation has been done, sincere thanks are given. To the Librarians of Georgetown University and of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Md., the writer is indebted for the use of their newspapers. Also, to the professors in the History and Sociology departments of the Catholic University, under whom the writer studied: Doctors J. M. Cooper, J. A. Ryan, W. J. Kerby, P. H. Furfey, A. K. Zeigler, M. P. McQuire, H. Wright, and Mr. Robert, for their encouragement, and to the members of the American Church History Seminar for their friendly counsel and cooperation, the writer expresses his sincere appreciation.

## I

### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

When, in 1839, Pope Gregory XVI issued his famous Apostolic Letter *In Supremo Apostolatus* on the slave-trade, no section of the world was more aroused or responded more bitterly than the Southern States of the American Union. Their resentment showed clearly that the Pope's letter was misunderstood. In an effort to explain the letter to the Southerners, Bishop John England of Charleston, S. C., wrote in the *United States Catholic Miscellany*, October 3, 1840:

I now proceed, sir, to establish a distinction which I am astonished you could have overlooked. The distinction between the "Slave-Trade," as prohibited by the United States, and the engagement in which would be a high crime, I believe a felony, in anyone of their citizens, and the continuance of "domestic slavery" in any one of the States by the authority of that State, and with the existence or regulation of which the Government of the United States has no concern whatsoever. . . . The Pope neither mentions nor alludes to this latter in his Apostolic letter which is directed, as were those of his predecessors, solely and exclusively against the former.

This extract is taken from the first of a series of letters written on slavery by Bishop England and addressed in 1840 to John Forsyth, the Secretary of State under President Van Buren.

The Abolition Movement was just then gaining momentum through Northern agitation and the slavery question was gradually taking a predominant part in party politics. The resentment of the South had been aroused by the declarations of Forsyth, who was attempting to influence the Southern vote against General Harrison, the Whig candidate for the presidency. Asserting that the Catholics stood behind Harrison, Forsyth called attention to the letter of Gregory XVI, to prove that the Church was abetting the Abolitionists and had condemned the domestic slave system as it existed in the South.

The scholarly Bishop of Charleston answered Forsyth's misinterpretation by demonstrating forcibly that the Pope did not

condemn slavery as an institution, and that slavery is not incompatible with Catholic theology. At the outset of his correspondence with Forsyth, he wrote:

Slavery then, sir, is regarded by that Church of which the Pope is the presiding officer, not to be incompatible with the natural law, to have been established by human legislation, and, when the dominion of the slave is justly acquired by the master to be lawful, not only in the sight of the human tribunal, but also in the eye of heaven.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. England further distinguished between the *slave-trade* which was already prohibited by the United States, and *domestic slavery*, and assured the Southerners that the Holy Father was well aware of the Southern institution since he had said of it: "the Southern States of your Union have had domestic slavery as an heir-loom, whether they would or not."<sup>2</sup>

About the same time that Bishop England was addressing his public letters to Secretary Forsyth, the learned Coadjutor Bishop of Philadelphia, the Right Reverend Francis Patrick Kenrick, who was later to become Archbishop of Baltimore, was writing his *Theologia Moralis*, a work intended especially for the needs of American students. Writing of slavery, he said it was not contrary to the natural law. Of the system in the Southern States he wrote: "caeterum quum ea sit rerum conditio, nihil contra leges tentandum est, nec quid quo servi in liberatem vindicentur, vel quo jugam aegre ferant faciendum vel dicendum."<sup>3</sup>

The Negro slave system was an institution peculiar to the South and it can be only understood in the light of its history. As old as man, existing today in parts of Africa, slavery has been found among all peoples of every level of culture. The causes are various and the degree depends on time, place, and circumstance. Though most peoples have experienced slavery in some form, it seems that the Negro made the ideal slave. For the most part, as Dr. England showed in his letters, the state of slavery for all other peoples, of Greece and Rome for example, was that of intellectual and cultural equals who found it very difficult to sub-

<sup>1</sup>The *United States Catholic Miscellany*, October 10, 1840.

<sup>2</sup>*Letters of the Late Bishop England to the Hon. John Forsyth* (Baltimore, 1844), 15.

<sup>3</sup>F. P. Kenrick, *Theologia Moralis* (Philadelphia, 1841), I, 255.

mit to the hardships and tyranny of their inferior position. The Negro, on the other hand, was from a lower level of culture in the first stages of his slavery, and under kind and humane treatment found his lot to be much better than in a state of freedom. His cheerful and happy disposition was a quality that gave him the greatest adaptability to slavery of all the races known to history. "The Negroes have ever been the world's premium slaves; prehistoric Pharaohs, medieval Pashas, and even the nobles of Europe, esteemed them as such."<sup>4</sup> It was in America, where the climatic and economic conditions were most favorable, that Negro slavery took the deepest root. It was here that slavery was to form the basis of a new culture; and to cause a nation to be thrown into one of history's greatest civil wars.

Negro slavery in the New World had its origin in the Old. The first enslavement of the Negroes came from the Arabs, who passed it on to the Moors from whom the Portuguese and Spanish received it. Prince Henry of Portugal began the importation of slaves into Europe in 1444. By 1460, Portugal alone was importing seven or eight hundred slaves from Africa each year.<sup>5</sup> The Church was the first to raise its voice against the dragging of slaves into captivity to be sold. In 1462, Pope Pius II, in a letter to a Portuguese bishop, commanded him to censure severely all who were engaged in the nefarious trade.

This trade received a great impetus after the discovery of America. Greeted kindly by the natives of the West Indies, the Spaniards, because of their desire for gold, returned this kindness by harsh treatment which later brought the natives into quasi-servitude. But they made poor slaves; and unable to perform the heavy labor of the mines and plantations, since they were not physically robust, they were soon almost completely wiped out.<sup>6</sup> In 1501, Ferdinand, King of Spain, permitted the importation of Christian Negroes to perform the hard work, and seventeen years later, Charles I granted a favorite courtier the license to conduct slave traffic with the colonies; he in turn sold the patent to Genoese merchants.<sup>7</sup> The merchants purchased slaves from the Por-

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<sup>4</sup>U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (New York, 1927), 8.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>6</sup>W. D. Weatherford—C. S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (New York, 1934), 115.

<sup>7</sup>The royal decree of 1501 was a check to control the slave trade in the



tuguese who obtained them from the dark continent, and thus was begun the slave trade between Africa and America.

A hundred years later we hear of Negroes in the English colonies. The first mention is in 1619. John Rolfe wrote in his diary "about the last of August came in a Dutch Man of Warre that sold us twenty negars."<sup>8</sup> This is strange too, since the first Englishman to engage in the slave traffic was Sir John Hawkins in 1562; and Queen Elizabeth had her own slave ships engaged in the West Indian trade. But the demand for slaves anywhere was determined by economic conditions and the English colonists at this period were merely struggling for an existence. It was not until after John Rolfe's successful experiment of cultivating tobacco in 1612, that the Jamestown settlers concentrated on farming. It was not until every available space was planted that the problem of laborers arose. After experience with white indentured servants, which had many drawbacks, the cost being high, a new system of labor was sought, and in 1619 the Negro came to solve the problem.

The development of the large tobacco farms in the Southern English colonies was undoubtedly the reason for slave labor. This demand, coupled with the demand of the West Indies, created a trade, general in extent, cruel in means, and nefarious in results. The slave trade was begun by the Portuguese, carried on by the Spaniards, and in 1713, almost completely controlled by the English. Practically every major European nation had a slave-trading company, and even up until the American Revolution, kings, nobles, and influential leaders in Europe held stock in this maritime slave traffic.<sup>9</sup> So extensive was the trade that even at that time people became alarmed. The Popes especially, condemned the shocking business, and addressed many letters to the countries engaged in it. In 1537, Paul III, wrote to the Bishop of Toledo; in 1639, Urban VIII addressed a letter to the court of Portugal; and in 1741, Benedict XIV sent an Apostolic Letter to the Bishops of Brazil. In all these letters were renewed the con-

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New World. The grant of Charles I was, unwittingly, the recall of this control and the beginning of a lucrative trade. Phillips, *op. cit.*, 15.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>9</sup>Weatherford-Johnson, *op. cit.*, 127.

denunciations and censures of previous Popes on all, who, by their cupidity, carried these miserable natives into servitude.<sup>10</sup>

Slavery had important commercial consequences for those engaged in it. It made men in Europe and America wealthy, it brought prosperity to ship owners, to distillers of rum, and to the manufacturers of trade goods. The means employed to obtain the slaves were too often horrible and inhuman. The terrible suffering of the famous "Middle Passage"<sup>11</sup> must have bothered the consciences of those who took part in the "triangular trade,"<sup>12</sup> because all that was shocking in African barbarism was multiplied by the demands of foreign stimulation. The result was the expatriation of some 74,000 Negroes annually, to parts unknown to them.<sup>13</sup>

Slavery did not grow rapidly in America until 1700; at that time it was fairly distributed throughout the English colonies, the proportion being determined by the demand for its labor. There were large plantations in Rhode Island which employed numerous slaves. The Dutch West Indies Company encouraged slavery in the New Netherlands, and when the English took over New York a considerable number was employed on the large estates along the Hudson. It was in the Southern colonies, where the climate and farming conditions were most favorable to the Negro, that the majority of slaves were to be found. But at this period they were employed in all the colonies.<sup>14</sup>

The time had come, however, when the North and South had arrived at a crossroad, and each was to go a different way. The North was to become a society of small farmers, rich business men, large cities and great manufacturing industries. In such a society there was little room for Negro slavery and with the advent

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<sup>10</sup>Cited by Pope Gregory XVI in his Apostolic Letter *In Supremo Apostolatus* of December 3, 1839.

<sup>11</sup>The journey from Africa to the West Indies was called the "Middle Passage" because it was the second part of the triangular trade route. The lot of the slaves can be appreciated by the fact that out of every one hundred shipped, seventeen died in passage, twenty-five died from sickness and disease, and not more than fifty lived to be effective workers.

<sup>12</sup>The "triangular trade" was rum made in New England, used as barter for slaves in Africa, who were brought to the West Indies and exchanged for sugar and molasses, which were brought back to New England. O. P. Chitwood, *History of Colonial America* (New York, 1931), 418.

<sup>13</sup>Weatherford-Johnson, *op. cit.*, 123.

<sup>14</sup>Chitwood, *op. cit.* 422.

of European immigration there would be an opposition to slave labor. Again, there was the great difficulty of acclimating the Negro to the cold climate of the North. So that, owing to the form of economic life the North had taken, and the conditions of life that a rigorous climate would create for him, the Negro did not become an important industrial institution in any Northern community.

In the beginning only small farms were cultivated in the South. When slavery was introduced, larger plantations were begun, with tobacco, rice, sugar, and cotton as the major staples. The Negro took kindly to farming because he was able to master the simple art of the fields. There soon sprung up a strong agrarian society resting on the slave system as an economic necessity. The climate was a factor which made work in the South difficult for the white farmer but agreeable to the Negro. The slave system of labor had many advantages over white labor. It gave the owner complete control over a constant supply of labor for the larger plantations. It made labor cheap (even though a Negro slave cost around \$1,500) and the Southern climate was found to be adequate to the black man's standards of living. It further relieved the whites from the hard farm work and enabled them to cultivate the fine arts, thus establishing a sort of aristocracy for which the South has become mythically famous.<sup>15</sup> And since the Negro was adapted to work in the warmer climates a better quality of product was obtained.

In comparing the North and South, it is necessary to understand why slavery existed in the South as it did, and not in the North, in order to appreciate the great controversy that was soon to arise between the two sections. Succinctly, it was economic: A growing agricultural society, with large plantations and many slaves, was opposed to a society that was fast becoming industrial with a desire for high profits, where slaves were unable to be used. It was also climatic: the work had to be done in the South and the Negroes, used to the hot weather, were naturally suited to the work while in the North there was not enough work to go around.

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<sup>15</sup>At their best, the Southerners did have a finer human culture and greater charm than any other Americans, and they made their social life an art. J. T. Adams, *America's Tragedy* (New York, 1934), 95.

Until 1700, slavery as a system was scarcely questioned except by an occasional idealist or crank reformer. About this time, however, there arose an anti-slave-trade feeling due to a general fear that the constant increase of Negroes might make them more numerous than the whites. This fear took the form of opposition to the foreign slave-trade in general and the importation of slaves in particular. Public men and social leaders began to see a danger, and raised their voices in protest. In 1712, Pennsylvania protested against slavery; in 1726, Virginia had the honor of being the first State to protest the further importation of slaves; in 1771 and 1774 Massachusetts passed abolition measures.<sup>16</sup>

It was in the South though, that the anti-slave-trade feeling was strongest, even if many were in favor of it. In the North, because of the fewness of slaves, there was no noticeable slave question as yet. It may be said that slavery as an economic system was then accepted as part of the natural order as the wage system today, and there was little difference in the state of living either in the North or in the South.

However, during the second half of the eighteenth century, the opposition to the slave-trade grew into an opposition to the very system of slavery itself; and this decidedly came from the North. The editor of the *Freeman's Journal* was to write some years later, that the Northern opposition was due to the fact that "slavery was found unproductive, not paying to the North; partly by sales and partly by emancipation it passes from the North. Then by degrees it is discovered, 'all men are created equal.'"<sup>17</sup> Just before the American Revolution the question troubled the minds of the statesmen of the colonies, and after the war, practically all the Northern States took legislative steps to free the slaves. Beginning in 1777, the North had, in 1804, by legislative means, either abolished slavery or had adopted measures to suppress it. Many Southern States had prohibited the slave-trade. The question was discussed in the Continental Congress and was settled finally in the Constitutional Convention. The framers of the Constitution were opposed to slavery, but the States of South Carolina and Georgia insisted on its recognition as a condition

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<sup>16</sup>Weatherford-Johnson, *op. cit.*, 123.

<sup>17</sup>November 24, 1855.



of their joining the Union. It was provided, as a compromise, that Congress might in twenty years (after 1808) interdict the foreign slave-trade, but not the domestic slave system.

It is quite evident that slavery was almost suppressed in the United States in the period 1780-1790. But there were inventions perfected at this time that were to revolutionize the cotton industry and make the South one of the richest and most important sections of the earth.<sup>18</sup> If ever the South could have given up her slave system, the time had now passed. The world-wide demand for cotton, the increased exportation of raw materials, the ready market soon made "Cotton King." Every plantable space was given to cotton; the plantations became larger and gave up tobacco, rice, and sugar; and the greater demand for cotton meant a greater demand for workers—the slaves. It meant the slaves were more and more being concentrated into large numbers by the plantation owners, it meant consequently, that slaves were becoming an indispensable economic instrument of Southern society; it meant that slavery was now, not only suitable to the South but paramountly necessary.

This economic aspect soon placed great power in the hands of the Southern planter class, and this was soon translated into political power. The protests against slavery very quickly unified the Southerners; and to save their necessary institution, they brought the fight into the halls of the Federal Congress. "From 1807 on to the breaking of the Civil War this group of Southern leaders were able to hold the balance of power in Congress, even though they were fighting for a cause which must ultimately go against them."<sup>19</sup> Every important political issue from this period on rested, in the final analysis on the slavery situation. Every skirmish between North and South ended in a compromise; so much so that this period may be called the period of the great compromises, with slavery, or the effect of slavery, in the background of all of them.

Socially, the period about 1830, was to witness a changing opinion on slavery throughout the world. Partly due to the rabid

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<sup>18</sup>Hargreaves' Spinning Jenny, 1767; Arkwrights' Power Loom, 1768; Whitney's Cotton Gin, 1793.

<sup>19</sup>Weatherford-Johnson, *op. cit.*, 137.



anti-slavery agitation and partly because civilization was entering upon an era of broad humanitarianism, there arose in Europe and America, especially in the North, the Abolition movement. It is necessary here to distinguish between anti-slavery feeling and abolition. The former looked upon slavery as a social evil that should be suppressed. It took into consideration the causes, the development of slavery, and the rights of the slave owners, while at the same time thinking of the welfare of the Negro. But it did not desire that slavery should endure, nor that the Negro should be always in a state of subjection; such an idea, the *Freeman's Journal* said at the end of the Civil War, "we consider as one of the narrow minded Yankee notions."<sup>20</sup> Yet, because slavery was a social evil, Society should strive to rid itself of it, but in a manner that would not lead to greater evil. The Abolitionists strove for immediate, universal, and unrecompensed emancipation. They did not desire to take into account the economic rights of slave owners or the effects of immediate freedom on the Negro. It was a favorite theme of the Catholic papers at the time to discuss the fanaticism of this school. The *Catholic Mirror* especially said of them: "how great is the animus which pervades the destructive and malignant school of the Abolitionists."<sup>21</sup> These latter were unwilling to consider anything but their own point of view and their literature was marked by "amazing bitterness, vituperativeness, exaggeration, narrowness, and lack of practicality."<sup>22</sup> So extreme did their agitation become that "they made no allowance for their own errors, no allowance for the historic process which fastened slavery on the South, no allowance for the economic and social problems involved in emancipation."<sup>23</sup> After a few years, the intense conflict over slavery in the United States was lost in a sea of abolition propaganda. It was to develop many angles, social, religious, political, which were to obscure the real issue.

Nowhere did abolition take on a religious aspect as it did in America. Nowhere were the Churches affected by slavery as they were in the United States. "The most important of the many schisms which have occurred among the American Protestant

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<sup>20</sup>March 4, 1865.

<sup>21</sup>February 28, 1863.

<sup>22</sup>J. T. Adams, *op cit.*, 116.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.* 117.

Churches were those growing out of Negro slavery."<sup>24</sup> Yet, many Protestant preachers and leaders were slave owners. The great Jonathan Edwards owned slaves; churches in the North took up collections to supply their pastors with slaves; and George Whitefield, in 1751, pleaded for the introduction of slavery in Georgia.<sup>25</sup> All the larger Protestant sects were more or less in close contact with slavery and were to be greatly affected by it. In the early days of American slavery, the Protestant Churches had made some provisions for the religious instruction of the Negroes. One of the purposes of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was to preach the Gospel to the Negro. The Baptist and Methodist Churches particularly admitted the slaves to Church membership.<sup>26</sup> With the rise of the Abolition movement however, the Churches, in so far as they were Northern or Southern, allowed themselves to become anti-slavery or pro-slavery, respectively. So fierce did the enmity between the two factions become that the Catholic newspapers accused the Protestant ministers of being a cause of the bitter hostility between the North and South. Bishop Verot of Savannah in a sermon delivered in 1861, said of the Protestant clergy:

As for the Protestant clergy, with of course, some honorable exceptions, they have brought about this deplorable state of affairs, in which the South is arrayed against the North, and in which war, bloodshed, and all the atrocities of which civil discord may yet have their sad exhibition. Protestant intolerance and bigotry have demolished this beautiful edifice which wisdom, moderation, and prudence have reared to political liberty.<sup>27</sup>

In the early colonial days there was very little opposition to slavery on purely moral or religious grounds, except among the Quakers. "The largest anti-slavery influence wielded by any religious body in the colonial period was that exerted by the Quakers."<sup>28</sup> They began their anti-slavery propaganda in the latter part of the seventeenth century and used every form of pub-

<sup>24</sup>W. W. Sweet, *The Story of Religions in America*, (New York, 1930), 412.

<sup>25</sup>J. T. Adams, *op. cit.*, 18.

<sup>26</sup>W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, 245.

<sup>27</sup>*Freeman's Journal*, June 18, 1856.

<sup>28</sup>W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, 245.

lication, newspapers, almanacs, pamphlets and books, to spread their ideas. They continued their opposition, led by such ardent leaders as John Woolman, in their Yearly Meetings until 1787, when no Quaker was permitted to own slaves.

The other Protestant bodies were not so unanimous in their sentiment toward the system as were the Quakers. The denominations mostly affected by the question during the Abolition period were those more evenly distributed throughout the nation, Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians.<sup>29</sup> The slavery issue among the Baptists began in the Triennial Convention held at Baltimore in 1841, and reached its climax at the Triennial Convention in Philadelphia in 1844. The following year, the pro-slavery Baptists, after separation, formed the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Methodist Church, led by their bishops and lay leaders, were opposed in the beginning to any discussion of slavery in their Conferences. In fact, from 1830 to 1844, the bishops were opposed to the Abolition Movement and ministers-to-be were refused admission if they avowed adherence to Abolition. But there were many anti-slavery agitators in their ranks and they forced the crisis at the General Conference of 1844, where the majority was found to be of anti-slavery temper. A quarrel ensued, the result being a "Plea of Separation" which was a bid to the South to withdraw. The Southern delegates promptly did so, and in 1845 the Methodist Church South was formed. The following years were to constitute a period of growing bitterness between the two branches of American Methodism.

The Presbyterian Church was separated into two bodies—the Old School and the New School.<sup>30</sup> The Old School took the middle course (if not pro-slavery), refusing to discuss the slavery question and regarding it "as a great evil, but an evil inherited, an evil of long standing, and so interwoven with the texture of Southern society that, like a chronic disease, it must require much time and patience and kind treatment to eradicate it."<sup>31</sup> But

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<sup>29</sup>Other Protestant sects were either confined for the large part to the North or to the South, and hence were pro-slavery or abolitionist, for example, Congregationalists. cf. W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, 427.

<sup>30</sup>This division was the result of a schism on the question of Revivalism which took place in 1837. W. W. Sweet, *op. cit.*, 440.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 443.

the question occupied much of the time of the New School General Assembly. In 1846, it decreed that slavery was wrong. This decision was confirmed in 1849; and in 1853, the Abolition wing becoming more powerful, trouble arose. It was brought to a head in 1857 by the Southern delegates forming a separate General Assembly which became the United Synod of the South.

Thus did the American Protestant Churches divide over the slavery issue and break one of the great spiritual ties binding the Federal Union together. It is perhaps this one factor that hastened on the social, and especially the political, break which culminated in the Civil War. The Southern Churches, having to defend what those of the rest of the world had come to condemn, were forced to separate. The effect it had on the weakening morals of the country is well stated by the *Freeman's Journal*:

The dissensions, contradictions, dismemberment and decay of the Protestant religion have obscured and confounded, in the minds of the people, the decision of any moral question. Before justice and before God, the responsibility for the present angry and threatening state of the country rests upon Protestant sectarianism. Had the self appointed spiritual guides of the people been competent to enact the decision of one proposition—whether slavery be in all cases a sin or not—much provocation and danger would have been spared the country.<sup>32</sup>

The Catholic Church alone was able to stand by her principles and remain a united group. This fact the Catholic press continually emphasized as a contrast to the Protestant Churches. They repeatedly referred to Bishop England's letters on slavery as a summation of Catholic doctrine on the subject and the criterion of the Catholic position. The editor of the Baltimore *Catholic Mirror* wrote in 1861, concerning the Catholic clergy:

Our clergy and press have been true to their mission. Our priests in the North, whatever their private opinions about slavery have not desecrated their pulpits by slavery harangues. Our clergy in the South, who have a true appreciation of the facts, preach to the slaves obedience, and to the masters clemency.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>December 22, 1855.

<sup>33</sup>April 20, 1861.



With a moderate and Christian attitude toward the slaves, Catholic Churches maintained the only spiritual bond uniting the North and South in 1860.

Summing up the history of slavery in the United States, it is possible to divide it into four periods. In the first, (1619-1760) we find slavery generally accepted throughout the colonies. The second period, (1760-1830) witnessed the rise of anti-slave trading sentiment, when foresighted and sane individuals realized the dangers and advocated the curtailing of the system which was bound to produce dire results. The third period, (1830-1860) may be called the Abolition period. Political, social and religious hatreds, misunderstandings and sectional bitterness, divided this "more perfect union" into two hostile camps where brothers became enemies, the States antagonists, with the Churches excommunicating one another. The fourth period saw the bursting forth of the smouldering fire, when it seemed that America would be consumed for its merciless traffic in human bodies. The Civil War which followed, was the greatest conflagration of modern times, until the recent World War.

## II

### THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC PRESS

The Catholic press, which was to accomplish so much in revealing the doctrine of the Church on slavery, was in the first stages of its development during that controversy. The year 1830 was to witness the beginning of a hectic and turbulent period for the Catholics and the Church in this freedom-loving country. It was indeed, a period of defense and heated controversy on the part of Catholics, both for their Church and their age-old religious culture. So unfounded was the general anti-Catholic attack that some medium was necessary to meet it on its own grounds. While every conceivable method was used by the non-Catholics to present their hatred of things Catholic, it was principally the newspaper that was employed. Newspaper reading with the Americans was, as Bishop Spalding put it, "a passion which amounts to a national characteristic."<sup>1</sup> As an agent for religious bigotry, it was most effective. Churchmen and Catholic lay leaders saw the necessity of a Catholic press, to be used as a corresponding medium to meet the assault and at the same time provide information on Catholic doctrine and discipline.

To understand adequately the nature of the animosity in the United States toward Catholicism, a general idea of the events that transpired in that period is necessary. The secular history of this era was generally chaotic; and chaos and Catholicism—which means order and peace, are natural enemies. In Europe, society was experiencing upheavals and radical changes in the old regime. An exaggerated spirit of democracy, an effect of the French Revolution, and intense Nationalism, together with the realization of the growing importance of the industrial revolution, placed the continental countries in a revolutionary state. They were, at the same time, attempting to adjust themselves to the ill-fated Napoleonic Coup.<sup>2</sup> This political status had repercus-

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. J. L. Spalding, *The Life of the Most Reverend M. J. Spalding* (New York, 1873), 75.

<sup>2</sup>C. J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Europe* (New York, 1931), II, 65.

sions which were felt socially, economically and religiously. In Catholic countries, religion was especially affected by the aftermath of the French Revolution. In the British Isles, the fight for religious emancipation was going on and it became a cause for renewed anti-Catholic hatred within the United States. In Italy, for example, there arose a struggle for national unity which was, in effect, a revolt against papal civil authority, and it reacted in this country (where the office of king and prelate in the person of the Pope was not clearly understood) in an attack on the Church because of the "political ambitions," "the encroachments," and the "dominance" of the Roman Court.

In our own country, the conditions were even more disturbing and, though it is difficult to separate the elements of the confusion into their proper categories, nevertheless the hatred of the Catholic Church found causes mainly in the social and political fields. The "Era of Good-Feeling" ended in party political strifes. It was the period of Jackson, Nullification, Tariff; of National Expansion and the frontier spirit; and of the thrilling politics of Webster, Clay, and Calhoun. It was the beginning of a sectional consciousness and the fight over slavery, that ended in the temporary pact between the North and the South with the Missouri Compromise.<sup>3</sup>

All these elements, both European and American, played their part, either directly or indirectly, in giving to American Protestants occasions on which to attack the Church. For example, one effect of the European situation was the large immigration to the United States. A large percentage of the immigrants was Catholic, Irish, German and French. The increase of the Catholic population alarmed American Protestants, and they organized an opposition that developed into the Native American Movement. This was both political and religious. The Abolition Movement and its decidedly religious and social fanaticism was to evoke animosity between Catholics and Protestants also. In social questions like private schools, church property and external religious observances (holy days, Sundays, and feast days) causes were found for bitter anti-Catholic invective.

The controversies usually began in the newspapers, primarily because it was the newspaper that the people read most. The

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<sup>3</sup>T. C. Smith, *Parties and Slavery* (New York, 1906), 116 ff.

newspapers became a powerful agent for intolerance and an avenue by which to play on the ignorance of the people concerning things Catholic. Moreover, the journals had an appeal; they were easily read, easily circulated, and easily understood by the work-a-day people of the young nation. The importance the newspapers played in the intellectual life of the American people may be inferred from an editorial in the *Freeman's Journal*:

But truth unuttered, remains dead. If it would speak in this country, if it would reach the popular mind, and be listened to by the country, if it would speak to the people, it must speak by the press. It is the newspaper the people read, it is the newspaper that thinks for the people, that talks for the people, that guides and controls them.<sup>4</sup>

The importance of the newspaper, while immediately seen to be necessary by Catholic leaders, was not equally so appreciated by the Catholic laity. "In America the newspaper is an institution: it holds the nearest possible relations to American life and movement.—Do the Catholics appreciate this fact? They certainly, as a body, do not;" said the *Freeman's Journal*.<sup>5</sup> Only slowly did the Catholics reciprocate by establishing their own newspapers to meet Protestant attacks, and to counter by the same instrument. Slowly, but gradually, the American people were being reached and taught Catholic doctrine through the same organ by which they were taught error. It was to fight a then one-sided battle that the Catholic press was finally commenced. The history of Catholic pioneer journalism had been nothing more or less than a losing struggle against great odds.

The first newspaper was published in America in 1704, but before the end of the century there was a large number in circulation, every principal city having at least one.<sup>6</sup> In a short time America was a newspaper-reading country and the organs developed into powerful agencies of influence over their readers. While the first effort of Catholic journalism was the publication of the *Michigan Essay* in 1809,<sup>7</sup> the first Catholic journal was really

<sup>4</sup>October 6, 1855.

<sup>5</sup>February 9, 1856.

<sup>6</sup>Chitwood, *op. cit.*, 571.

<sup>7</sup>So states P. J. Foik, *Pioneer American Journalism* (New York, 1930), 1, but A. W. Baumgartner, *Catholic Journalism* (New York, 1931), 2, states that the *Courier de Boston* (1789) was the first.



Bishop England's *United States Catholic Miscellany*<sup>8</sup> published in Charleston, South Carolina in 1822. In 1825, a Catholic paper, the *Truth Teller*, was begun in New York. In 1829, a third paper, the *Jesuit* was printed in Boston. From then on, there arose here and there, newspapers and periodicals, which, while not precisely Catholic in purpose and aim, were sympathetic towards Catholicism, and defended it always.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, there were also papers which professed to be Catholic, but in reality were "infidel in tone" and "anti-Catholic, directly in some cases, indirectly in all."<sup>10</sup>

Such was the beginning of Catholic journalism. Some papers were to be of long duration, many were shortlived.<sup>11</sup> In 1800, the influence of the Catholic press in defending and propagating the Faith was practically unknown because of the small number of papers; but by 1835, there were at least eleven Catholic weeklies; by 1840, sixteen; by 1855, thirty-six.<sup>12</sup>

The function, aim, and purpose of the Catholic newspaper may be summed up as: (1) a defense of Catholic principles; and (2) the enlightenment of an ignorant country concerning the Faith. Baumgartner has defined the function as follows:

The function of a Catholic paper is to present information about the Church, its activities and to serve as a medium for diocesan, parochial and general announcements emanating from religious authorities and to express editorial opinion in conformity with Catholic teaching on important questions of the day.<sup>13</sup>

The characteristics of a Catholic paper was explicitly set forth by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore:

Let that be called a Catholic newspaper which sets forth and defends the doctrine of the Church, narrates the progress of the Church at home and abroad, and is ready to submit in all things to the authority of the Church.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas F. Meehan, "The Catholic Press" in *Catholic Builders of the Nation*, IV, 222.

<sup>9</sup>Foik, *op. cit.*, 7, calls such papers "Irish National Journals."

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.* 198. These are the words of Archbishop Hughes.

<sup>11</sup>Rev. T. Middleton, "Catholic Periodicals" in A. C. H. S. *Records*, IV, 221, and XIX, 18.

<sup>12</sup>Of the early Catholic papers printed before 1845 and still being published are the *Catholic Telegraph* (Cincinnati, 1831); the *Pilot* (Boston, 1836); the *Pittsburgh Catholic* (Pittsburgh, 1844).

<sup>13</sup>Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, IX.

This aim has never changed. In 1919, when the American Hierarchy issued the last Pastoral, they wrote:

To widen the interest of our people by acquainting them with the progress of religion throughout the world, to correct false or misleading statements regarding our belief and practice, and, as occasion offers, to present our doctrine in popular form, as a means of forming sound public opinion, to discuss and bring forward the question of right and wrong—these are among the excellent aims of Catholic journalism.

Baumgartner, arbitrarily but conveniently, divides the history of the Catholic press into three periods. The first runs from 1789 to 1840, when the Catholic periodicals were not merely apologetic but necessarily aggressive in repelling the attacks of its adversaries. The papers were then feeble, and the standards as yet unformed, and rather than organs of news, they were controversial and apologetic in character. The second period comprises the years 1840 to 1884, when the Catholics began to realize the importance of their press and earnestly to support it. During this period, the journals were mostly weeklies and, everything being equal, they were of a high standard, comparable to the secular and other denominational papers, and were edited by outstanding representatives of the Catholic press. The third period, 1884 to the present saw the real development of Catholic journalism, culminating in the formation of the National Catholic Welfare Conference press department.

In this dissertation we are concerned with the first half of the second period, 1850-1865. The journalistic skirmishes of those times produced able men who made a name for themselves in the history of American journalism. Foik writes: "Catholics needed able defenders against the assaults of religious fanatics. The spirit of the times produced therefore many militant journalists. Brownson, McGee, and McMaster were all men of strong convictions. They were also men of culture and learning."<sup>14</sup> It was such men that made Catholic doctrines known, and by their forcefulness and dynamic pens made Catholic papers influential and respected. Brownson was one of the outstanding philosophers and litterateurs of his time. McGee was a militant journalist.

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<sup>14</sup>Foik, *op. cit.*, 212.

James A. McMaster was a man of vigorous rhetoric, living in a time that demanded it. McMaster, especially, was a champion of his ideas, and when opposed it is said, "he spared no one high or low who differed with him, and his invective was as bitter as an unlimited vocabulary could make it."<sup>15</sup> He was the *primus inter pares* of Catholic editors of his day and was recognized as such by his secular professional confreres.

It was the good fortune of Catholic journalism to have had such patriotic and strong-principled men writing its pages during the troublesome times between 1850 and 1865. It was a period of spirited controversy, especially in the political sphere where there were vexsome problems disturbing the equilibrium of the nation. Most of the problems were political, it is true, but there were phases to them that had developed religious and social features, as we shall see later.

In a question like slavery religious fanatics had injected the religious element and reform partisans the social element. Especially in the religious phases of the political controversies the Catholic papers were compelled to enter in order to present the Catholic viewpoint. Often, by the force of their energy and enthusiasm, Catholic editors were led into the "twilight zones" where it was difficult to know where the religious side ended and the purely political began. Always the policy of the Church and her mediums of teaching, of which the press is one, has been to keep out of politics. On this point of political mixing the Catholic journals declared again and again that their purpose was to stay clear of purely political questions, and one paper was ready to attack another if it were to become explicitly a political organ. For instance, the *Catholic Mirror* stated:

The discussion of slavery, anti-slavery, Abolition, Free-soilism, or Brownism, does not come within the scope of the Catholic press.

Upon these questions there is by no means unanimity of sentiment among Catholics, and as in the abstract, there is no question of faith or morals involved, we feel no duty compelling us to enter on one side or the other, still less to stand on both sides.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>J. T. Smith, *The Catholic Church in New York* (New York, 1908), 395.

<sup>16</sup>December 10, 1859.

This shows clearly that the policy of the press was to maintain neutrality in political questions.

In the crisis that was about to break in 1860, when it must have been difficult for any editor to remain indifferent or impartial, the *Catholic Mirror* again warned the religious press anent the Secession controversy:

These questions, it is true, belong to the secular press. . . . It is evident, however, that if the religious press desires to wield an influence of good in the midst of so many heavy and discordant passions, it must seek the auxiliaries to its efficiency in the lesson of charity, rather than in the aspirations of partisanship. . . . It is the plain duty of the Catholic Press not only to abstain from adding new causes of irritation to the passions which are surging around us, but to soothe them into docility and quiet . . . to this effort, our Catholic press should bring the energies of a hearty and unflagging coöperation.<sup>17</sup>

But, unluckily, not all Catholic papers were able to keep themselves aloof from the political strife and some were drawn into the struggle. The *Freeman's Journal*, under McMaster, gave full expression to partisan opinions and openly advocated the Democratic party, Buchanan, and Douglas.<sup>18</sup> During the Civil War, other Catholic papers avowed adherence to the Democratic party as the only means of political salvation.<sup>19</sup> But the *Pittsburgh Catholic* gave warning to such papers by remarking: "Every Catholic has a right to be Abolitionist, Republican, Freesoiler, or Democrat—but no right to make his opinion to be the opinion and teaching of the Church."<sup>20</sup> On the whole, a study of the Catholic papers of that time will demonstrate the neutrality of the press, and when the tragedy finally occurred, party politics, private opinions and opposition gave way to full coöperation in an effort to save the Union.

The Catholic press has received always, the approbation and full coöperation of the Catholic hierarchy. The pioneer papers in fact, were founded by priests.<sup>21</sup> The clergy, fully cognizant of the

<sup>17</sup>November 21, 1860.

<sup>18</sup>May 12, 1860.

<sup>19</sup>For example, the *Catholic Mirror*, December 1, 1860.

<sup>20</sup>Cited in *Catholic Mirror*, June 15, 1858.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Foik, *op. cit.*, 1, ff.



importance of the newspapers, were its ardent advocates. Bishop Spaulding thought "the Catholic Press in the United States had been given a providential mission of the greatest importance."<sup>22</sup> The priests begged support for the press, the Bishops in letters, pastorals, and in synods and councils assembled, stressed the importance of Catholic newspaper literature. In the Second Plenary Council, for example, under Title XI, we find the Fathers recommending the Catholic newspapers as a barrier to the evils of the secular daily press.<sup>23</sup> In the pastoral of 1837, complaint is made that the Catholic newspapers are continued and sustained, not by the aid of Catholics, but by the personal contribution, under adverse circumstances, of the editors and publishers. The Bishops report, in the pastoral of that year:

We regret to learn that in several instances those newspapers conducted under the eye of the ordinary ecclesiastical authority are continued only at a pecuniary sacrifice to their proprietors and by the zealous and gratuitous exertions of their editors. We would impress upon you the necessity of exertion on your parts, to have them better sustained and their circulation extended as widely as possible.

Again in 1858, the pastoral letter of the Second Provincial Council of Cincinnati, using strong and explicit language, mentions the laity's half-hearted support:

The apathy and indifference of Catholics in their respect [the support of Catholic Press] is indeed as lamentable as it is inexplicable. . . . We entreat you, Beloved Brethren, to awake from your lethargy in this respect and extend a willing and generous support to those papers and periodicals . . . let every Catholic family, then, in the land, which is able—and nearly all are, take a sound Catholic paper or periodical.

In 1879, the reigning Pontiff, Leo XIII, in remarkable language, noted the necessity of the newspapers as a medium of instruction, and commanded their use, in an audience given to American Catholic journalists. "Since custom has made newspapers a necessity, Catholics should labor principally to apply to

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<sup>22</sup>Spaulding, *op. cit.*, 76.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Rev. Peter Guilday, *A History of the Councils of Baltimore, 1791-1884* (New York, 1932), 213.

the salvation of society and the defense of the Church the use of the papers."<sup>24</sup>

Finally, the pastoral of 1884, after dwelling on the importance of the press, the exhortations given by Popes, prelates, learned Catholics, and the necessity of them as a bulwark against the vicious anti-Catholic press, states:

If the head of each Catholic family will recognize it as his privilege and duty to contribute towards supporting the Catholic Press—and keeping himself well acquainted with the information it imparts, then the Catholic Press will be sure to attain its rightful development and to accomplish its destined mission.

The Third Plenary Council marks a change in American Catholic journalism. In a time of great national development and expansion, Catholic newspapers sprang up all over the country. It was soon found necessary to establish a central service to supply verified and uniform news to the large number of Catholic papers. In 1905, a Catholic Press Association was founded, worked well for a time, but after the World War proved inadequate. In 1919, the Catholic hierarchy of the United States issued its famous National Pastoral. Out of one of its recommendations was organized the National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service with world-wide correspondents. Its purpose was to provide the Catholic papers with news of Catholic activities throughout the world.

In little over a hundred years the Catholic press had truly become "an apostleship, which, when directed to the defense of virtue and truth, equals, or follows closely, the Apostleship of the priesthood."<sup>25</sup> The real worth of the Catholic papers lies in the fact that misrepresentation of Catholicism in secular and other religious papers is greatly reduced. The quick refutation of the pernicious slanders against the Church by the Catholic journals has commanded the respect of fellow journalists who have learned, after a tedious battle it is true, the wisdom of being very careful about news that has a Catholic bearing.

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<sup>24</sup>Address given in an audience of February 22, 1879, cf. G. D. Wolff in *Catholic Congress* (Baltimore, 1889). Also, portions of letters of Pope Pius IX to American Catholic newspapers, published in *Freeman's Journal*, May 12, 1860.

<sup>25</sup>*Freeman's Journal*, October 27, 1855.

### III

#### THE SLAVERY CONTROVERSY IN GENERAL

From the vantage ground of a wider perspective, the attitude of the Catholic Church toward slavery and Abolitionism in the United States prior to the Civil War undoubtedly shows her wisdom. The Church faced the slavery question in the very beginning of her existence and she has had to deal with it all through the ages. History is witness to the prudence, justice, and humanity with which she has been actuated in its regard. In the Roman Empire it was she who first espoused the cause of the slaves and finally won for them alleviation and later emancipation. During the Middle Ages, it was again the Christian Church that gave the serfs hope by fighting for their rights and ultimately by gaining freedom for them. Even in the New World, in those Catholic countries where the influence of the Church was felt, there never arose the fight for abolition as in the United States and yet the slaves there obtained freedom in due time. Moreover, today there is not the racial, color, or social problems in the Latin countries as a result of emancipation as there is in the United States—all because the slaves in those countries were prepared slowly for their state of freedom.

Never has the Church condoned slavery, and equally she has never condemned it. There are many things in this world that have to be taken as they are, not as they ought to be, and among them the Church has reckoned slavery. The Catholic Church looked upon the lot of the slaves as accidental. This unfortunate people was indeed human and possessed human rights, but circumstances out of the control of slave and master, forced the former into an inferior social position and made him economically dependent on the latter. In many cases this situation was to the mutual advantage of both.

The Church, nevertheless, saw the grave injustices in the system and strove constantly to change it. Distinguishing always between the slave-trade and domestic slavery, Pope after Pope condemned the former, while the Church in her teaching and practice admonished the master to perform his duty of bettering the conditions

of the slaves in the latter. She instructed the master in justice and charity, the slave in obedience. But all the time the Church preferred and labored for the abolition of involuntary servitude. She has ever been the protector of the slave, of his human rights and spiritual prerogatives, and has aimed gradually to raise that class to the rank of freeman.

Slavery has been a social phenomenon in one form or the other in all ages, in all countries, in all societies, pagan and Christian; it differs from place to place in degree only. The Catholic Church has accepted that social phenomenon and since it is not *malum in se*, she has not condemned it but has tolerated it. By a gradual and constant struggle she has assisted in alleviating the sad conditions until a time came when the slaves could be expediently liberated and could take their place in a free society. Thus, she saw instinctively from her centuries of experience that in the given conditions of Negro slavery in America, immediate emancipation would not prepare them, nor find them prepared, for freedom; and as a result, greater evils would afflict society and greater injustices would be done to the Negroes who would not know how to make use of their new freedom, with the final consequence that neither the blacks nor the whites would be benefited.

With this in mind, it can be better understood why the Church acted as she did officially, in the great slavery struggle in America. In the early days it is true that "many of the wealthier Catholics owned slaves, who attended the missions with their masters, kneeling alongside of them at the confessional and before the altar to receive Holy Communion."<sup>1</sup> Even bishops, priests, and Religious Orders owned them.<sup>2</sup> The practice of the Catholics gives evidence of toleration for the system. But the Church was fully concerned that the Catholic owners would perform their Christian duty toward their slaves. In the Synods and Councils held under the American hierarchy she took cognizance of that relation. In 1858, for example, the Bishop of Natchez, the Right Reverend William H. Elder, in a Pastoral Letter admonishes "masters and mistresses to lay close to their consciences the duties they owe to their ser-

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<sup>1</sup>Spaulding, *op. cit.*, 136.

<sup>2</sup>Archbishop Carroll and Bishop Flaget; the Jesuits (Cf. The "Mosley Letters" in A. C. H. S. *Records*, Vol. XVII, 1906, 294) and the Sisters of Charity (A. B. McGill, *The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Kentucky*, 36).



vants, they are bound to provide them with opportunities to do everything required for the good of their bodies and souls. . . . For those servants have immortal souls, like yours, made to the image and likeness of God.”<sup>8</sup> The paternal regard of Catholics for their slaves was under the conditions benevolent and humane. A striking example of the Catholic attitude is the statement made in the will of Charles Carroll of Carrollton:

I have always regarded slavery as a great evil, producing injury and loss to the whites principally, an evil for which we are not responsible who now hold slaves, considering that God in His wisdom, placed them here, or permitted them to be introduced. My experience and full convictions are, that as long as we hold that class of labor among us, they are as a mass, better cared for and happier [as slaves] than if they were free and providing for themselves. I therefore give all my slaves to all my children with these positive injunctions: that none of them be sold except among themselves, and for those crimes for which they would be purchased by the State and for gross insubordination. I also direct that they shall continue to have the advantages of the religious instruction they now receive, and that their morals and habits be watched over like those of children. It may hereafter be found advisable to move them to the South to cultivate cotton where the climate is more congenial to their health, while it removes them from the pernicious influences of the low whites who now corrupt them. In this way they may be made profitable, and eventually a fund provided for them, to establish them at some future day in Africa or the West Indies. It is my wish that my children will not transmit them to my grandchildren.<sup>4</sup>

During the slavery controversy many Catholic prelates made statements in its favor that seem to give some degree of sanction to it.<sup>5</sup> The attitude of the Church is always conservative and moderate; but when the Abolition movement arose in all its fury, she and her ministers kept prudently silent. While other Churches entered the fight, the Catholic Church alone made no official statement in favor or against it. In this instance, the reason is not to be found in her attitude towards slavery, but rather in the nature

<sup>8</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, June 5, 1858.

<sup>4</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, February 28, 1863.

<sup>5</sup>Bishop Kenrick in his *Theologia Moralis*, (Vol. 1, 255 ff.); Bishop England in his *Letters to Forsythe*; *Bishop Verot*, in a sermon published in the *Freeman's Journal*, June 18, 1864, uphold it.

of the Abolition movement itself, which became a political controversy, tending, not to the profit of the Negroes, but to the disruption of the nation.

If the Catholic Church in the United States was non-committal in 1860, she became more silent during the Civil War. The question naturally follows: Was the Catholic body as such, also silent? Did Catholics enter the debate in any manner? Were they united on the question, or like other groups, were they too, separated into two opposing camps? The answer to these questions<sup>6</sup> lead logically to the following: What was the attitude of the Catholic press? Did the papers treat of the slavery quarrel? If so, what were the opinions of the Catholic editors? Did they reflect the sentiment of the Catholic people?

In order to form some idea of the Catholic position as expressed in the newspaper editorials, a study of the same is necessary. Now, a study of newspapers may be very valuable in procuring the general opinion of a period when read in large quantities and over a period of time. This is particularly true if the evidence is checked up by other sources.<sup>7</sup> The material in newspapers and the use of press opinion has inspired recognized historians who have made definite contributions to historical progress.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, "the newspapers are powerful in three ways—as narrators, advocates, and as weathercocks. They report events, they advance arguments, they indicate by their attitude what those who conduct them take to be the prevailing opinion of their readers."<sup>9</sup>

If it is true, as Bryce further says, that the newspaper in America is an organ which serves the expression, rather than the formation, of public opinion, a similar study to obtain some idea of the attitude of Catholic editors may be made. Did they express Catholic opinion? Taking the *Freeman's Journal* of New York and the *Catholic Mirror* of Baltimore as norms, because they were representative Catholic papers of the North and South respectively, it was found that there is a mine of information to be had in Cath-

<sup>6</sup>These questions have been treated by R. J. Murphy in his essay "The Catholic Church during the Civil War," in *A. C. H. S. Records XXXIX* (December 1928), 271-346.

<sup>7</sup>The substance of an opinion expressed by James Truslow Adams in a letter to the writer, February 18, 1935.

<sup>8</sup>For instance, J. T. Adams, J. B. McMaster, R. Frothingham.

<sup>9</sup>James Bryce, *American Commonwealth* (New York, 1891), II, 263.

olic journals and that they are brimming with new facts and fresh slants on Catholic history.

The *Catholic Mirror* was published in Baltimore by the Kelly, Hedian and Piet Company, a pioneer Catholic publishing house, devoted to the printing and distribution of Catholic literature. The editor was, during this period, the Rev. Dr. Charles Ignatius White, a renowned author and historian, who had written many works on Catholic history. Under his direction the *Catholic Mirror* became an influential factor in the progress made by Catholicism in Maryland and vicinity. The paper was the official organ of the Most Reverend Archbishop of Baltimore, and the Right Reverend Bishops of Richmond and Wheeling. These dioceses comprised the section of the South mostly inhabited by Catholics, and the *Catholic Mirror* was subscribed to widely by the Southern Catholics. Its circulation was not confined merely to the Southern region, since it had readers throughout the United States. This is known from the list of agents and collectors mentioned in the paper. It was undoubtedly a Southern paper, expressing Southern sentiments, and was looked upon as such by the other Catholic journals.

The *Freeman's Journal* was, correspondingly, a Northern paper, being for a time the official organ of the Archbishop of New York. It was one of the best known Catholic papers and an accepted spokesman for Catholic opinion in the United States. It had a wide circulation in the North and was subscribed to even in the far South. Owned and edited by James Alphonsus McMaster, who was a man of strong convictions and fearless courage, the paper had a large circulation among the Catholic people. McMaster as an editor was honest, able, courageous and annoyingly frank. In politics a States' Rights Democrat, his writings became an influence in the great political controversies of the time. He strongly attacked President Lincoln and his administration with the result that he was arrested in 1861 and confined to Fort Lafayette for almost a year, and his paper was suppressed from August 24, 1861 to April 19, 1862. He was a religious man, a zealous Catholic and sensitive of the Church's honor. Because he was a power in the Democratic Party (to which the great majority of Catholics belonged), his editorial opinions were an influence on the Cath-

olic people.<sup>10</sup> In general, the policy of both papers was identical in the slavery dispute and it followed, in the main, the traditional attitude of the Church. They were decidedly Southern in sympathy—in politics as well as on the slave question.

At this point, a distinction should be made: concerning slavery there were three schools—two of which were opposite extremes. There were the Abolitionists of the North who denounced slavery as a “sin” and an evil to be done away with immediately. The *Freeman's Journal* and the *Catholic Mirror* wrote editorials opposing this extreme school. McMaster wrote in the former:

Does any plain sober man of common sense doubt that this country for a number of years has been steadily tending towards revolution? Is it necessary to cite evidence? Shall we summon the writings of the Abolitionist Journals, of Garrison and Gerrit Smith, the rank sectionalism of the *Tribune* and *Times* [N. Y.] the *Uncle Tom* of Mrs. Stowe, the philippics of Theodore Parker, the creed of the Know Nothings?<sup>11</sup>

There were the equally bitter pro-slavery Southerners driven to desperation by the Abolitionists, who, being forced to defend what the rest of the country was coming to condemn, went to the opposite extreme of declaring slavery to be a veritable ordinance of God. This class the two papers also condemned. The *Catholic Mirror* said:

Let men argue that the condition of the slave is most propitious for the development of the black race in this country and we are inclined to agree with them. Let them say that it is propitious for society at the South and for the political permanency of the Union, and we may not deny it. Let them tell us that it is not displeasing to Almighty God, nor derogatory to a lofty spirit of Christianity to hold this undeveloped race in a state of subjection to the whites and we have nothing to say against it. But when parsons at the South disgrace the name of religion by telling us that slavery is an ordinance of God—how a religion must stink in the nostrils of candid and rightminded men.<sup>12</sup>

The middle school—the “toleration school”—the school of Catholic philosophy which based its policy on the principle that the

<sup>10</sup>Cf. *The Dictionary of American Biography*, XII, 140.

<sup>11</sup>June 7, 1856.

<sup>12</sup>September 19, 1857; *Freeman's Journal*, October 29, 1859.



relationship of master and slave "is not an evil, *malum in se*" but merely a "social evil," to be tolerated until such time as it can be prudently replaced by another order.<sup>13</sup> This was the platform of both papers and they lent their pens in defense of domestic slavery as it existed in the Southland, being in favor of it on constitutional and social grounds.

Moreover, the two papers were in sympathy with the South and its slave system to such an extent that their editorials are in some respects similar—so much so that they can be arranged in parallel columns and found to be closely related. For example, the papers contain the following editorials condemning Abolitionism and its effects:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

The consideration of the political, social, and economic question of negro slavery is a different thing from the blind and provoking dogmatism of Abolitionism;—there is not the smallest prospect of any advantage to the Negro, or the country, from outside interference. Abolitionism is the most sterile foolishness that has ever afflicted a guessing, speculative, fault-finding country. The people are tired of it. The Negro has been made too consequential in affairs. The American people are coming to have an antipathy for the African; a decided feeling against him, a constant cause of trouble, mischief and misunderstanding.<sup>14</sup>

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

There is a fanatical spirit now abroad. . . . What has fanaticism, the genius of discord done for the enslaved race of this country? It has arrested the progress of emancipation in Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and other States. It has tightened the bonds of the slaves. If it has recently in some cases set them free, it has been only to make their condition, unfit as they are at present for freedom, more deplorable. If it accomplishes its unwise aims throughout the Slave States, so as to effect a sudden and general abolition, the end will be disastrous to the colored race. They cannot live upon any terms of equality with their recent masters.<sup>15</sup>

In the majority of cases, however, it will be found that when they write about slavery, there are different ideas expressed by the two editors. The reason is not to be found in their attitude toward slavery but in their physical reaction to slavery. The

<sup>13</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, January 21, 1850.

<sup>14</sup>August 27, 1859.

<sup>15</sup>May 10, 1852.

*Catholic Mirror* expresses the feelings in, and of, the South. The people of Baltimore considered themselves Southerners, and had the Southern appreciation of the Negro.<sup>16</sup> They were intimately acquainted with the Negro, knew his nature and understood his cultural status. The Marylanders and Virginians knew also the Southern problems, both social and economic, and the part the Negro played in them. Therefore, the editor of the *Catholic Mirror* spoke and described in real, explicit, and intimate language the problems of the slavery question.

On the other hand, the *Freeman's Journal* was in fact a Northern paper, and expressed a Northerner's understanding of the Negro, who was "repugnant" to him. In New York he was far away from him; he had little contact with the Negro in his Southern habitat, and hence, he little appreciated him in his more natural environment. Consequently, the *Freeman's Journal* was concerned more with the political rights of the Southerners under the Constitution than with the welfare of the slaves. Its editorials in behalf of the Negro, or the Southerner, or against the "New Englanders" were subtle, circumspect, and usually clothed in political implications. In short, it was a different mind writing from a different viewpoint. This will be seen in many editorials cited throughout.

In 1845, the slavery controversy was at its height in the United States and the people were pretty well divided. The Catholic press had little to say on the subject at this period, being occupied with other questions that concerned it. Even in 1850, there is little to be found in the papers, but a beginning can be detected. At first sporadic, the editorials appear as occasion or event demand. Then, between 1859 and 1865, the newspapers became fully concerned over the problem. A survey of these two papers from 1850 to the end of the Civil War reveals that fifty-two editorials were written on slavery directly; on closely related phases there were twenty-six additional.<sup>17</sup> But within the period of 1850 to 1860, there were in all only twenty-two editorials;<sup>18</sup> the rest were written between 1859 and 1865—the majority being penned between 1859

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<sup>16</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, February 20, 1858.

<sup>17</sup>Of this number forty-five were written in the *Catholic Mirror*, thirty-three in the *Freeman's Journal*.

<sup>18</sup>Fourteen in the *Catholic Mirror*; eight in the *Freeman's Journal*.

and 1863 which was the peak of Catholic participation in the struggle.

It can be said, in a broad way, that the attitude of the two papers was the general view of the Catholic body, and of the other Catholic papers. This is determined by the evidence gleaned from the correspondence in the two papers. They took much notice of opinions written in the other Catholic journals and reprinted extracts from their editorials. Accordingly, a relative idea of the sentiment of the other papers may be gathered by a study of the correspondence columns of these two papers. It is from such evidence that the *Freeman's Journal* is able to say that "on the question of slavery Catholics alone are agreed at the North and at the South; and this is not the result of any labored attempts to enforce unanimity—it is spontaneous."<sup>19</sup> Concerning slavery the Catholics were obviously united, and in the agreement, they were in favor of, or at least not opposed to, the slavery system. Although later on, when the war came, the Catholics fought in the North for the cause of the North, and in the South for the cause of the South, according to their respective allegiance—they fought for reasons other than slavery. They fought for political, constitutional or patriotic reasons. This will explain Archbishop Hughes' letter to Mr. Cameron, the Secretary of War, in October 1861, when he wrote:

There is being insinuated, in this part of the country, an idea to the effect that the purpose of this war is the abolition of slavery in the South. If that idea should prevail among a certain class it would make the business of recruiting slack indeed. The Catholics, so far as I know, whether of native or foreign birth, are willing to fight to the death for the support of the Constitution, the Government, and the laws of the country. But if it should be understood that, with or without knowing it, they are to fight for abolition of slavery, they would turn away in disgust from the discharge of what would otherwise be a patriotic duty.<sup>20</sup>

In spite of this, the Catholics were not absolutely of one mind and there is evidence of some differences of opinion among them. For example, Orestes A. Brownson was opposed to slavery and

<sup>19</sup>February 19, 1856.

<sup>20</sup>J. R. G. Hassard, *Life of the Most Rev. John Hughes* (New York, 1866), 437.

thundered against it in his *Quarterly Review*.<sup>21</sup> The *Catholic Mirror* answered him and it was joined by the other Catholic papers. A controversy resulted. After a criticism of Brownson's "violent declamations," his "one time acknowledged" position as "champion" of the Catholic cause, "his theological and philosophical learning," and his "art of reasoning," the *Catholic Mirror* states:

Brownson appears to us to be in a position of a philosophic and theological *suspect*. No one knows how far he may be trusted, and consequently none now freely or fully trusts him. He is no longer a champion, no longer an authority, for anything beyond his own individual opinions.

These may pass for what they are worth.—He comes out as an ultra-Abolitionist, although in times past, he was utterly opposed to that school . . . there is [in his arguments] the perpetual expression of northern sentiment: irrepressible conflict; impossible co-existence of the two forms of labor under one common government.<sup>22</sup>

And when Brownson criticizes Maryland's action in the war, and in regards to slavery, the *Catholic Mirror* in the same editorial, further rebukes him:

The cool assurance with which this insulting charge is made is as well founded and as well proved as the numerous assertions with which the learned Reviewer's article "Slavery and the War" is stuffed. He misstates and mistakes the motives of the South, as much as he does the character of the Union men and Maryland. As to the influences of the North in this quarrel, he is in a better position to understand them than we are, and perhaps as far as the New Englander is concerned, he states them right when he appeals to their cupidity and self interest, rather than to their honor and patriotism.

It is unfortunate that the *Freeman's Journal* was unable to enter this controversy. It had been suppressed during this period and McMaster was in prison. But later on, it did attack Brownson's views on slavery.<sup>23</sup>

The majority of the debates which may be read in the Catholic papers of this time, are really differences of a political nature, or

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<sup>21</sup>October 1861, Article "Slavery and the War."

<sup>22</sup>October 5, 1861.

<sup>23</sup>August 20, 1864.



controversies on the war—its causes, methods, policies—rather than any opposition to slavery itself. For example, the *Catholic Mirror* entered a protracted fight with the *Pittsburgh Catholic* in April, 1861. On a closer study it is clear that the question of dispute is not slavery but the responsibility for, and the conduct of, the Civil War. The *Catholic Mirror* took the South's part, the *Pittsburgh Catholic*, the North's.<sup>24</sup>

A short time later, the *Catholic Mirror* published two interesting letters. They were a clear portrait of the unity of Catholic thought and charity during the bitter fraternal struggle. Bishop Lynch of Charleston, S. C., addressed a long letter to Archbishop Hughes of New York on the Southern view of the war. The Archbishop answered, giving the Northern opinion. Both were published in the *Catholic Mirror*, side by side, on September 6, 1861. Though they disagreed on the motive and the prime aggressor, the responsibility and the conduct of the war, yet in one particular they did express agreement: that was on the slavery question. In the first part of each letter is a discussion of the slave institution in the South. They both agreed that though in time it ought to be abolished, it was then the lesser of the two evils, the better for the Negro, and the better for the South.

Individual Catholics—priests and laymen—held divided opinions also. There were evidently a few priests who were in favor of the Abolition movement or at least against the institution of slavery and they must have given public utterance to their opinions. Both papers strongly castigate these priests:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

We address ourselves now, immediately to Catholics. Some few of the Catholic Priesthood by whatever ignorance or forgetfulness of the teachings of their Church, or by whatever soft yielding to the political or social influences of false opinion around them, have given in to the idea that Negro slavery is a *crime* on the part of the masters who hold

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

—We are pained to find that a Catholic clergyman could stoop to dabble in the same turbid and filthy waters [of Abolitionism]. In a priest we recognize something of the dual character of priest and citizen. With the first, in some sense, we have nothing to do; with the second we have no right to interfere unless, emerging from the

<sup>24</sup>April 27, 1861.

them. . . . Probably they will not claim to be more saintly, more gifted with universal knowledge or to understand better the true mind and spirit of the Catholic Church — than St. Thomas (who) declares “slavery is not of divine right, but has been introduced by human laws, for the mutual advantage of masters and slaves.” Let Abolitionist time-servers, or deluded sentimentalists, opinionate as they will and oppose slavery. But put the forked fact to them. “Slavery is a *human* relation” that the Catholic Church recognizes as *just*. If they deny it, they deny the doctrine of their Church. If they think differently, they are *opinionated* people which — translated into Greek, means heretics!<sup>25</sup>

proper sphere of private life, he assumes the character of political teacher, and obtrudes upon the public ideas, maxims, and principles which we deem at variance with the national weal, and subversive of the political rights of others. If Dr. Moriarty (a Catholic priest) or Dr. Beecher, or any other of that class chooses to ventilate his loyalty to Abolitionism, or endorse usurpations which practically leave us at the mercy of a “military necessity” he must expect to share the obloquy which an outraged public opinion, just awakened to the sense of public danger, is heaping upon the party with which he fraternized. If the Cassock is allowed by the wearer, to trail in the filthy mire of partisan politics, can it escape the contamination of the contact?<sup>26</sup>

Both papers frequently condemn a correspondent who disagrees with their policies on the many sides of the Negro question. Sometimes the papers attack them vehemently, sometimes they merely mention them in passing. In the majority of cases these occasional skirmishes are not on slavery itself but on questions related to it.<sup>27</sup>

As a general summary of Catholic newspaper opinion it may be said that, withal, there was an underlying theme or motif in the attitude of the Catholic newspapers toward slavery: they were influenced by their Church's historic policy; they favored a continued toleration of the slave system, or to put it negatively, they did not oppose it; and their approval was on account of the social and political questions involved. To them the paramount issues were: the welfare of the Negro and the rights of the Southerners under the Constitution.

<sup>25</sup>February 11, 1865.

<sup>26</sup>January 24, 1863.

<sup>27</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, December 1, 1860.

#### IV

### THE RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SLAVERY

In presenting extracts from articles in the two papers to demonstrate the validity of the foregoing conclusions, it is necessary to state that strict chronological order of the editorials would be impossible on account of the nature of the subject. The slavery dispute was like a chameleon; the arguments given for or against were of many colors. The whole question was in fact, polygonous. Therefore, in order to arrive at a fairly unified and clear idea, the study has been divided into two main divisions.

The first, the religious and social aspects, because the American Churches emphasized the religious, and the Northern Abolitionists, the social side of Negro slavery. The second, the economic and political aspects, because the slave system as an economic factor, greatly increased the antagonism between the agrarian South and the industrial North, and led finally to the political fight over the slavery institution. All sides of the question, in the end, converged into the political controversy. The questions whether or not the Federal Constitution should prohibit slavery; or whether Congress could restrict it; or whether each State, as sovereign and independent, could legislate for itself—all these were paramount issues and slavery was related to them as the cause of the dispute. In other words, the slavery controversy gradually developed into a political theory discussion: the States Rights Democrats of the Jeffersonian School *versus* the Republicans of the Madison School.

The anti-slavery movement, which was an offshoot of the broad humanitarianism of the eighteenth century, found ready support among religious Protestants of the North, and it was not long before the question became a religious issue of prime importance. Societies were formed in the Churches whose purpose was to increase the anti-slavery sentiment, and it begot leaders who became tireless in their tirades against the Southern system. It developed into a united campaign for "immediate, universal, and uncompromised emancipation which was marked far more by an almost insane vilification of all who differed from them than by humani-

tarian sentiments."<sup>1</sup> Spurred on by their ministers, who, in traditional Puritan spirit, were convinced that what they believed the world also must be made to believe, the Protestant Churches would stop at nothing to procure success for their cause, not even a division in their own ranks.

It has been stated already that the religious climax came in the period 1840 to 1856. The result was the sectional division of the greater Protestant denominations. Although the spiritual ties of the country should have been the last to break, and Christian unity should have been the ideal to inspire national unity, it was in fact, the Protestant Churches that first created sectional hatred, a national division, and veritably placed the country in two hostile camps. The *Freeman's Journal* and *Catholic Mirror* indicted the Protestant leaders in the following editorials:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

To those who consider not only parties but the causes lying behind, which made and form parties we address the query: what men—what class—are at the bottom of the Abolition faction?

Who, but the Protestant clergymen? Who lately attempted to intimidate Congress with three thousand signed manuals? Who have irritated and exasperated the North and poured obloquy and misrepresentation on the South? Who have sundered their own Church organizations upon a North and South dividing line? . . . They are the true fomenters of the mischiefs which imperil this union.<sup>2</sup>

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

There are men in these United States, in clerical garments, who, by neglect of their own business, and meddling in that which was not, and is not theirs, have done evils to this country which they cannot repair.

Upwards of three thousand preachers, attempted a few years ago to reprove the Senate of the United States for the performance of its legitimate duties; and from that day to this, these men have been preaching up doctrines most dangerous to the peace of this country, and which may yet prove fatal to this now glorious and powerful union of States.<sup>3</sup>

The Northern Protestants were not alone to blame. The radical anti-slavery agitators in the Churches in the North were met by rabid pro-slavery ministers in the South who were not long in

<sup>1</sup>J. T. Adams, *op. cit.*, 116.

<sup>2</sup>December 8, 1855.

<sup>3</sup>September 15, 1860.



finding arguments based on the Scriptures which confirmed their slave system. Especially were the Southern Presbyterians extreme in their defense of slavery, claiming it to be of divine ordinance, a divine institution. In May, 1857, the Southern Presbyterians enunciated their "divine ordained" theory. The *Catholic Mirror* strongly condemned them in an editorial on September 19, 1857. There follows from then on a number of articles in the Catholic papers attacking the unfounded argument of the Southern Church. Finally, in the June 16, 1860, issue of the *Freeman's Journal*, summing up the causes of the troubled social conditions, McMaster wrote:

. . . Take another aspect of our social state, at which we have already glanced. Religionists at the North have, to a great extent, been led into the meshes of error, by the narrow dogmatism of anti-slavery preachers. . . . At the opposite side [South] of the country, religionists have heard from their pulpits, instead of doctrines that can reconcile their just rights with their conscience, theories denying the common origin of all mankind, and delusive mockeries of conscience, in the attempt to make slavery not merely a thing permitted, or an obligation of necessity under certain circumstances, but a faith to be propagated, a rule of life to be insisted upon—to be spread—to be perpetuated—to be adored where it exists, and its absence to be everywhere regretted.

But the Catholic journals did not only condemn the conduct of the Protestant sectionalists; they strove also to lessen the harm already done to the religious sense of the nation by bringing before the American people the example of the Catholic Church. While they protested against their extreme views, they appealed to the Protestant Churches to follow the policy of the ancient Church. In the same editorial quoted above, the *Freeman's Journal* says:

The public mind is fast becoming aware of the fact, and what is religious in that mind turns, with preparation for new sentiments, towards that Church which alone has outlived far harder forms of slavery, and has taught the bond, and the master of the bond, to live in charity and mutual advantage.

The fact is, the Catholic Church alone stood apart from the whole disordered situation. In all her official acts, her Councils,

decrees, Pastoral Letters, the American Church, through her prelates and priests, took the attitude of healing silence or conciliatory advice. This position commanded respect. Both newspapers did not fail to make the militant Protestants conscious of it by remarking:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

How often, in the past ten years, have we reiterated the idea: "a great country must have a great religion!" In our elaboration of this thesis, there have been Catholics who saw in our words an exaggerated effection for the institutions of our country, because we say they *naturally demanded* the Catholic religion. There have been Americans who saw in our arguments only an adroit plea for the Catholic religion because we represented it as, *alone among creeds*, in harmony with our political institutions as they were. But it was neither the one nor the other. We saw a great and beneficent Providence of God about to perish, as the history of the world is strewn with other wrecks, for lack of rightly using.

This is a wide and great country. It needed a wide and great religion. A narrow religion must seek narrow and sectional limits. The religion of God is wide and great, for it is universal—Catholic—it is one in itself, but adapted to all men, everywhere, in all conditions—to the American Indian . . . , to the Asiatic . . . , to the African in his slavery, who has been happy and virtuous and useful, by means of the supernatural graces of the Catholic religion.<sup>4</sup>

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

The observative and just people of this conservative country have looked upon the course of the Catholic Church in regard to our national troubles with profound respect. Certain it is, she has never fanned the flames of discord.—Her ministers have never substituted any *issues* of the day for the word of God in their mistaking the abolition of slavery for the abolition of sin. They have never taught insurrection to slaves, nor have they commended the institution of slavery.—Upon this subject there is a mean for Christian ministers, and they have adopted this mean. They have taught slaves obedience and they have taught masters justice and humanity.

Does the Church approve of slavery? No. Does she stamp it a sin? No. It is one of the evils that has always rested on humanity, and she has ever endeavored to mitigate and gradually to remove it; and her measures have been gentle, consistent and effective.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>June 28, 1862.

<sup>5</sup>May 10, 1862.

An example of the Catholic unanimity on slavery, North and South, was the publication in the June 18, 1864, edition of the *Freeman's Journal* of a long and scholarly sermon on slavery delivered by Bishop Verot of Savannah. It presented a striking contrast to the Protestant Churches to find the Northern paper writing of the Southern prelate that: "We know Bishop Verot to be a very soundly instructed theologian. He is of the *old school* walking in the straight paths marked out by the Saints and Doctors of the Catholic Church, who have all treated slavery—'*servitudo*' as 'a human arrangement for the common good.'" The sermon itself was a masterly piece of learning and judicious dialectics. It stated the philosophical and theological arguments advanced in favor of slavery. The occasion on which it was delivered was a "day of public humiliation, fasting and prayer"—January 4, 1861. The purpose was, as Bishop Verot said:

. . . to show, on the one side, how unjust, iniquitous, unscriptural, and unreasonable, is the assertion of the Abolitionists, who brand slavery as a moral evil, and a crime against God, religion, humanity, and society; whereas it is found to have received the sanction of God, of the Church and Society at all times and in all governments. On the other side, I wish to show the conditions under which servitude is legitimate, lawful, approved by all laws, and consistent with practical religion and true holiness of life in masters who fulfil those conditions.

Not only was it an explanation of slavery, it was also a condemnation of the methods and tactics of the Protestant clergy. But in such a strong avowal of slavery is not to be found, necessarily, the extreme approval of it as a natural necessity. It was in reality but a negative approval—a mere toleration. The *Freeman's Journal* emphasized this point:

The assertion that the Negro is not only *beset* now in subordination and compelled servitude to the white race—which we [*Journal*] hold, but that this must always and in all cases be true, we consider as one of the narrow-minded Yankee notions.<sup>6</sup>

The identical position was taken by Bishop England in his *Letters to Forsyth*, which, after eighteen letters written in defense of slavery, he concludes:

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<sup>6</sup>March 4, 1865.

I have been asked by many, a question which I may well answer at once, viz.: whether I am friendly to the existence or continuation of slavery? I am not—but I also see the impossibility of now abolishing it here. When it can and ought to be abolished, is a question for the legislature and not for me.<sup>7</sup>

It was undoubtedly the far-seeing policy of the Church, looking ahead into the future, that formed a norm of action for the Catholic papers. They foresaw grave dangers, not in Abolition, but in Abolitionism. The editor of the *Catholic Mirror* and especially McMaster in the *Freeman's Journal*, thundered against the would-be philanthropists of New England whenever an occasion presented itself. McMaster maintained that it was not true humanitarianism which inspired them nor real Christianity that directed their actions; rather, it was a misconception of the slavery system and a wrong idea of the true status of the Negro in that system. They either purposely refused to view the institution in its true merits or misstated the benefits that accrued to the African in the state of servitude. It would be infeasible to cite in this work all the editorials written on Abolition or against the Abolitionists.<sup>8</sup>

In 1852, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote her memorable book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It was one of the factors that brought on the Civil War. It sold more than 300,000 copies and was translated into twenty languages. It painted the evils of slavery in vivid colors, and described in one gripping story the horrors of the system that could leave only a profound impression on the reader. It was unfair and the unjust indictment caused the South to rise up in a flaming passion. The Catholic papers took the same attitude and the *Freeman's Journal*, ridiculing the foolhardiness of Mrs. Stowe and her novel, said in the issue of February 19, 1859:

There is something quizzically grand in pretense and ignorance when under full sail before the wind of popular applause. With the all-sufficient complacency of a *savant* who does *not* know, but who does not know that he does not know . . . among this tribe of successful empiricists, quite a notable one

<sup>7</sup>Most Rev. S. Messmer, *Works of The Rt. Rev. John England* (7 vols. Cleveland, 1908), V, 311.

<sup>8</sup>The editors of the Catholic papers did not write mere generalities against Abolitionism, they attacked, *nominatim*, such leaders as Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, J. R. Lowell, and H. W. Longfellow.



is the authoress of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—a mischievous, bad book of universal circulation. This lady has a certain undeniable quality of cleverness which has unhappily applied to foment ill-will between the portions of this confederacy of States . . . this writer knows little of Southern manners. . . . We pass over the glaring contradictions—This much for the Influential Ignorance of Madame Stowe.

Another incident drew vehement denunciations from the *Catholic Mirror* and *Freeman's Journal*. From a social point of view it was, perhaps, the outstanding cause of hatred and rancor between the North and South. In October, 1859, the historically famous John "Ossawatimie" Brown, "one of the type of fanatical Puritans who felt himself obliged to do the Lord's work as he saw it and felt that for him it was the complete extirpation of Negro slavery,"<sup>9</sup> with a small band of followers went into Harper's Ferry, in Virginia, and seized the arms in the Federal Arsenal. His object was to free all the slaves by force and then set up a Free State in the very midst of the South. This act was another inciting cause for the Civil War. He "freed no slaves but his act probably created tens of thousands of Republicans in the North and tens of thousands of Secessionists in the South."<sup>10</sup> The two journals wrote many articles on this provoking act. Under the titles "Brown's Conspiracy" and "The Approaches of Anarchy," the *Freeman's Journal* and *Catholic Mirror* respectively had lengthy editorials against "men of this type of madness" in their issues of October 29, 1859:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

If he [Brown] is a madman, what made him so, but the bad dogmas and the brutal teachings he has imbibed? Brown is no bad logician; he is rigidly consecutive; his premises, his friends' premises, bear his conclusions out to the letter. The difference is only this—the Sillimans, Beechers, Phillipses *et id omne*, preach treason and Brown practices it; they furnish rifles and he fires them; they are cowards, he is not. . . .

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

Men of this class [Brown] are dangerous not only to communities but to our national existence. . . . Yet they are not a whit worse than the preachers, political and religious, who urge them to their work. . . . They send murdering marauders among slave holders.

"The Abolitionists are a mere political party; their philanthropy, like the religion of some of the Harper's Ferry gang of murders, is rotten to the core.

<sup>9</sup>J. T. Adams, *op. cit.*, 139.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 140.

From October until December, when Brown was hanged, there are a number of articles on the fearful forebodings as a result of his act. On December 10, 1859, the *Freeman's Journal* said a propos of the execution that "if ever a man richly deserved hanging it is this hoary-headed villain and cutthroat. The blood of his victims has long enough cried out for justice."

It was the Stowe and Brown influence that caused the Catholic newspaper to print the condemnatory articles against the Northern Abolitionists; it was an influence, based not on fact or reason, but on prejudice and fanaticism. While the editors were conscious that as long as philanthropy confines itself to its legitimate scope it is a civilizing agency worthy of the deepest regard, yet they claimed to have seen through the tactics of the "Negrophiles":

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

We have never been able to perceive that the Northern agitation upon Southern slavery has benefited anybody. The Abolitionists of the North are either insincere or they are ignorant, and besides the question is a domestic one belonging in another latitude. This agitation is, in origin, a New England *ism* and wherever the disease breaks out or prevails, it can be always traced readily to that source. If anyone really thinks it a feasible act to abolish at once the system of African slavery in this country—granting, for example that the political power existed to do it, say for example, that the whole South consented to it—he who thinks so, seems to us to be at best, an honest simpleton. The feverish nonsense of Abolitionism is an import from England. It comes from the school of such ideologists as Thomas Clarkson, Zachary McCaully, Granville Sharpe and William Wilberforce.<sup>11</sup>

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

. . . The Elder Wilberforce, author of the West India emancipation, gave the impulse in the beginning of the century to the great controversy of slavery. Under the auspices of the party he led, the abolition of the slave trade was affected. The theory of universal emancipation, catching the breeze of popular fancy in the other hemisphere, was by an adverse gale, wafted to our own. The poets, preachers, and orators of New England caught up the refrain, and the institution of slavery at the South was assailed by a vocabulary as offensive as ever was devised by the perverted ingenuity of man.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>August 27, 1859.

<sup>12</sup>November 5, 1864.

Such was the role played by the North that the *Catholic Mirror* felt compelled to say: "We have no admiration for Yankeedom or its peculiar civilization or its representative men, or its morals, or its religion or its philosophy, or for any of its distinctive traits."<sup>13</sup>

To return to slavery proper, and the position of the Negro in that institution, it is interesting to find out the arguments submitted for an approval of it as a social force. They may be summed up as follows: the Negro was but recently from a barbarous state, brought forcibly to this country and set down in a new and higher culture. Only under the paternal influence of a good and just master could the African be taught to adapt himself to Western life. The state of slavery was but a step between savagery and civilization, in which they were to be held until such a time as they were capable of taking their place in a free society:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

It is a calumny to say that we defend any degradation of the negroes. It is calumny to say that we do not desire, in any lawful and proper manner would not promote, the amelioration of the condition of the Negroes now on this continent. But candor, reason, conscience, compel us to say that the worst foes of the Negro are those that howl for his dislocation from the subordinate position in which by law he is placed in the Southern States. Truth compels us to say that meddling with his condition by fanatics in Europe, in New England, and by their disciples elsewhere, has deprived him of privileges he enjoyed, has retarded many measures for his elevation, that, otherwise the moral sense of the Slave-holding States would have inaugurated. Truth compels us to say that the mere emancipation of the

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

There is a kindliness of relation between the Southerners and the Colored race little understood in the North and abroad. Long habits of association have engendered a sort of family feeling between the whites and blacks. The Southern planter is more like a patriarch than a despotic ruler; and provision for the comfort and well being of his bond-people is one of the ordinary duties of his life. He sees in them humbler members of his own family, and while he exacts from them moderate labor, he compensates them by supplying them with all the necessities of life, by taking care of the helpless, whether in sickness, old age, or infancy; and he allows them privileges to provide themselves with no small allowance of the comforts of life. This is the ordinary status of Southern slavery. . . . We do not think the

<sup>13</sup>March 12, 1864.

Negroes in the Southern States in their present condition, would be the dreaddest curse that could be inflicted upon them.<sup>14</sup> Abolitionists are true friends to the Colored race.<sup>15</sup>

Even today, looking back, it is evident that Abolitionism had dreadful consequences for the Negro. After all, the Southern slave girl Eliza was not to be compared with the Egyptian slave girl Aida, nor the slave buck Sambo with the Jewish slave Onesimus. Their cultural states were entirely different.

Therefore, the Southerners looked upon slavery as the school through which the Negro had to pass in his progress from African to American culture. The Northern Abolitionists derided it as too slow a medium, they demanded immediate emancipation. Freedom at that time for the Negro appeared as a radical measure to the *Freeman's Journal* and *Catholic Mirror*. In a few editorials they pointed out that Negroes who had received their freedom, had "returned to a state of barbarism"; that "general abolition would be disastrous to the Colored race"; and that they would "become wretched pariahs." The *Catholic Mirror* declared:

We sincerely wish to behold the Negro race among us in the full enjoyment of the rights to which it is entitled. But slavery which did so much to civilize the race is among the dead fossils of the past and the Negro is thrown upon his own resources to decide the question of his capacity to self-government. We know he is unfitted by habits, education, and previous appreciation of the civilizing arts of freedom to discharge the duties of a citizen.<sup>16</sup>

The fact of the Negro's inability to maintain himself was not known by the North, the papers further charged. The North was really an enemy to the slaves and to the social structure of the South when it advocated freedom, and its love for the Negro was, consequently, merely in the abstract and not based on real facts or experience. The papers state:

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<sup>14</sup>July 5, 1862.

<sup>15</sup>December 5, 1863.

<sup>16</sup>December 2, 1865.



## FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

. . . As Northern men, we have the Northern repugnance to contact with the Negro, though we feel a deep compassion for his unhappy fate. . . . Servitude, until things change greatly from what they are, is the only happy lot of the Negroes generally. Freedom will be for them, as a race, in this cruel world, nothing but extermination. Above all, God help the Negroes, when they fall into the power of the pitiless Puritans.<sup>17</sup>

## CATHOLIC MIRROR

The Southerners take good care of their bond people; and we add that the slaves in the South prosper more than the free Negroes in the North. We have heard of Negroes starving to death among the Northerners while we never heard of such a thing in the slave States—not in one instance. . . . In Boston, for example, the focus of Negrophilism, the deaths exceed the births nearly two to one.<sup>18</sup>

It seems indeed, that emancipation, at least in the beginning, was a sorry thing for the poor black people who were like youngsters turned out of their homes to shift for themselves. It proved a dismal failure in many parts of the Southland. Used to paternal direction of some sort, in his state of freedom, which meant he did not have to work, the Negro became miserable. For that reason the *Catholic Mirror* says in the above editorial that "since gradual emancipation has proved little beneficial to the Colored race in this country, that which is effected rapidly cannot prove more so."

The Catholic press, however, did not hold up the slavery institution as essential to society. The editors had little patience with the "New England Negrophiles" but they equally denounced the "Ultras" and "Fire-eaters" of the South. Rather, in the words of the *Catholic Mirror*, they stood "upon middle ground" and called upon all conservative people to set themselves against a crusade that threatened the Union. "If this Union is once dissolved, a thousand years may not produce another."<sup>19</sup>

The war finally began when the Confederates bombarded Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor on April 12, 1861, and the country was soon divided North against South. Although the sympathies of these two Catholic papers were obviously for the South, they

<sup>17</sup>February 11, 1865.

<sup>18</sup>December 5, 1863.

<sup>19</sup>September 15, 1860.

rallied their powers to support peace, the Federal Government and the Union. In the first excitement of the war the question of slavery was partly forgotten or submerged, and the editorials pleaded for peace<sup>20</sup> or for a return to the first principles of the Constitution.<sup>21</sup> But, as the war progressed and the social fabric was more and more torn apart, both papers allowed their Southern sympathy to be aroused; and they began attacks on the Federal administration, or the course the North was employing to subdue the South. These articles are important today because they show the sentiment in the North at that time was not uniform; and that the estimation of the great Lincoln of history books was not that of the Lincoln of 1860.

The war did eventually end and the country was restored to a peaceful regime, but the institution of slavery was swept away. The editors rose to the occasion, faced the fact and warned the nation that it had to busy itself with the moral and social adjustment of the Negro to the body politic. The first step, they advised, was to indoctrinate him in the principles of the Christian religion. "If the Negro race can be elevated in the scale of being, we look to the ministers of the Catholic religion." The *Catholic Mirror* further remarked:

If he, the Negro, ever reaches that comparative equality to which the sword has given him the right to aspire, we maintain that the Catholic Church can alone qualify him to fulfill the onerous responsibilities of his new position;—and through her agency alone do we look for his real regeneration.<sup>22</sup>

It would be only the guiding hand of religion that could secure the former slaves in a position of social equality with the former masters. The physical, social, and environmental inheritance of the Negro promised him only greater degradation in 1865. It was for that reason that the Catholic editors looked to the Church as the medium by which the Colored people could be taught their moral, social and economic responsibilities in their new state of freedom.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, March 2, 1861.

<sup>21</sup>*Freeman's Journal*, May 24, 1862.

<sup>22</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, December 2, 1865.

<sup>23</sup>Rev. J. T. Gillard, S.S.J., *The Catholic Church and the American Negro* (Baltimore, 1929), 3 ff.

## V

### THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ASPECTS OF SLAVERY

From the religious and social aspects of the slavery problem, we now pass to the economic and political aspects. The progress of slavery depends very largely on the economic conditions of the countries in which it exists. This is true of the United States. In the beginning there were no purely moral or political scruples in any of the early colonies against slavery. The fact is that it was accepted as an accommodation in all of them at one time, North and South. The division of sectional feeling toward the institution of slavery was, in reality, governed by the economic importance it played in that section. In the South, the Negro labor drove out free white labor because the former proved more satisfactory. Contrariwise, in the North, free white labor drove out Negro slave labor, aided also, by the factors of climate and the form of industry the North gradually developed. It may be said, therefore, that the economic condition of the two sections was ultimately the basis of difference over the slavery question.

Originally, the North used slaves, and when they were useful it condoned the system. Once they proved inadequate they were pushed into the South, and the Northerners came to the realization that slavery was a great evil. This idea is aptly expressed by the *Freeman's Journal*:

Negro slavery, chiefly introduced by New England bottoms, is established over the whole country; found unproductive, not paying, beyond a certain latitude, partly by sales, partly by gradual emancipation it passes from the North. But, by degrees, it is discovered that "all men are *born* free and equal" and that a black man is as good as a white man and better too, and New England straightway fabricates an *ism* for his immediate emancipation.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the South not only found the Negro useful, but, in time, profitable. The year eighteen hundred seems to be the turning point of the Southerner's attitude toward slavery.

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<sup>1</sup>November 24, 1855.

With the rapid rise of "King Cotton," as a result of the mechanical inventions made at that time, slave labor began to form an apparently indispensable economic foundation for the great society in the South. But, later on, history proved that the course the North took turned out to be right; what the South did turned out to be wrong. Undoubtedly the economic considerations produced the cause.

When it was certain that the North was to become an industrialized society and the South to remain an agricultural one, it became the logical thing to look upon slavery as the peculiar institution of the South. It was more than that, it was a necessary institution. But, from our view-point today, slavery was inexpedient economy. That is, when slavery is viewed abstractly and separated from all its ramifications, it is unsuitable economy. The peculiar thing is, slavery was not as mathematical as that—it could not be separated from its personal and social relationships. To the Southerners it was not a matter of unprofitable economy but wise sociology. There was, beside the purely economic relation, a personal one. There was none of the impersonality which has done so much to brutalize relations in industrialism today. There was also the social factor, as the *Catholic Mirror* pointed out:

The Southern slaves were born to their lot; and they and their fathers before them were slaves, so far as we can trace. What more cruel or abominable slavery can there be on earth than that which yet exists among the African tribes among themselves? Have the American slaves been *degraded* by being placed in their present conditions? Surely not. But have they been elevated by it? Let any sane man compare their condition with that of the mass of African Negroes, or even with the emancipated Negroes of the West Indies, and he will find it as clear as daylight that they have been elevated, vastly elevated.<sup>2</sup>

The mass of Negro slaves were brought to the South, strangely enough, by the economics of Northern shipping. The slaveholders were wont to accuse the Abolitionist traders of this fact many years after the slave trade was prohibited by Federal law. The people of the South, moreover, were able to accuse a number of Abolitionists, who would not use sugar in their tea because

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<sup>2</sup>February 28, 1863.



it was a product of slave labor, of white slavery in their Northern factories; and charge anti-slavery men, who were declaiming the evils of slavery, of being active in the slave trade a long time after it was prohibited. This was the opinion of the *Catholic Mirror* which further stated: "We believe the slave-trade has its most active abettors among the Northern Abolitionists who make such an outcry against slaves just as the artful rogue deceives those who might catch him or head him off by crying out 'Stop thief!'"<sup>3</sup>

Faced with the facts that the slaves were brought among them, the Southerners attempted to make them useful. As far as they could, they used the Negro slaves until slavery became a fixed institution. A certain relationship, unknown to Northerners, sprung up between the masters and the slaves. Living and working together tended to humanize this relation. In time the Negro naturally fitted into the economic structure of Southern society. Emancipation, so fanatically demanded by the North, was neither good economy for the South nor good humanitarianism for the slave. The Negroes were better off on the Southern plantations than in Africa, and they would lose as a body, rather than gain, by emancipation. They would not be a free, but a degraded class, with all the responsibilities of freemen but none of their advantages. They would become dependent either on the whites, who would not support them, or on the State, which would do very little for them. In all cases, it would turn out to be an inexpedient and costly economy. To the Southerners, slavery was the most expedient, the lesser of two evils, and they acted accordingly.

It is mostly the social economy of slavery that constitutes one of the arguments of the Catholic papers in favor of black servitude. The *Freeman's Journal*, it is true, has very little to say on the subject, mentioning it in only two editorials. Perhaps it is because the personnel of the *Freeman's Journal*, being Northerners, had the "Northern repugnance to contact with the Negro" and, hence, knew little of him. The *Catholic Mirror*, however, mentions the economic question a number of times. On this point, the papers again take the Southern view, and their expressions, sarcastic in tone, attack the Northern stand.

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<sup>3</sup>December 5, 1857.

Around 1860, the economic question was emphasized because many books were published which attempted to prove that slavery was a real loss to the South. Many Northerners advanced the argument as an appeal to the South to abolish the institution. To them it was but a mathematical equation. Just as it is today, when our economic recovery ought to follow the rules of the economists but does not, so also, to the South, the slavery situation was not so simple as the North pictured it. The *Catholic Mirror* said as much in its issue of January 24, 1863:

Butler, the *Massachusetts* warrior, has been addressing the people of the North on the subject of rooting out the Southern people from their own soil and raising cotton by free-labor which he asserts, can be done much more economically. No doubt of it; the fact has been shown before. Now, who are to be the laborers henceforth, free Negroes, or white slave men? This becomes an important question. The matter of wages and free labor merits particular attention at this time. The people of the South are not ignorant that hired labor would be more economical than slave labor. They have been told, often enough, how much cheaper the East Indian system is for the employers, where a free laborer does not cost his master, all told, on an average, more than six-pence a day. A Northern preacher wrote some years ago, to the Hon. J. C. Calhoun, advocating free labor in the South on economical principles. In showing the superior economy of free over slave labor, he remarks: "For where your laborer is free, he is an expense to you only twelve hours a day; and he will do the same work as a free man for less money than he costs you now. And nights, rainy days, Sundays, holidays, sick days and dying days, he is at his own expense and not yours." This is coming straight to the point. A Southerner has an investment in an adult slave from \$1,000 to \$1,500; but, assuming the smaller sum, the ordinary interest would be \$60. *per annum*—The man's clothing and food, and medical attendance, will average not less than fifty cents a day, making the total expense of each man to his master about sixty-five cents *per diem*. But in infancy and old age; in sickness and bad weather, the man has to be taken care of when he is rendering no service whatever. The laws of Virginia, for humane reasons, will not allow a master to set free a Negro slave above forty-five years of age. Negroes go upon the *retired list* at an early day, comparatively, and they come slowly into service. The majority of Negro boys in Virginia under fifteen, do no harder work than driving cattle from place to place, going to mill,

cutting a little wood for the house or cabin fire, and those other small offices called *chores* in New England. An English factory child is *prematurely old, from forced labor, before the Negro boy has ever done a day's work of steady labor*. The latter, meantime, becomes an elegant horseman, dances well, whistles well, sings well, and perhaps can perform on the violin, or, as he expresses it, can "play de fiddle good as anybody."

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In England, those who till the earth and make it lovely, are allowed only the slave's share of the many blessings they produce. They are in fact, however, very far from getting the slave's share, as they often suffer and die from want, which American slaves never do.

Certainly, there was more to the question than mere economics. A young North Carolinian, Hinton R. Helper, wrote a book in 1857, entitled *The Impending Crisis*, in which he based his arguments on statistics which proved that slavery was economically unprofitable. This book caused more discussion, and the *Catholic Mirror* took occasion to point out the same truth:

Slavery is not advantageous to the masters in an economical point of view. There is not a farmer in England, Ireland, or in any country where labor is abundant, who pays his laborers the equivalent of the slaves' allowances all summed up.

The slave laborer is not owned and maintained at a less expense than from \$15 to \$20 per month, *at the lowest estimate*, and while he takes so much, his wife, children, and parents, are supported entirely at the expense of the master. His compensation does not stop during sickness, or inclement weather, when farm work is suspended; his wages (or the equivalent) go on, even when so far from being a producer, the master has to support him and pay the doctor's bill.

Thus it is clear that slave labor is not economical labor. The Yankees found out this fact long ago; and with their usual philanthropy (which has some method in it) they got rid of slaves and slavery. They did not, however, give up the slave-trade so readily, as this trade was undoubtedly, until within a very short time, a paying business.<sup>3a</sup>

Great Britain was the largest slave-trading nation. In the early nineteenth century, she led a movement for abolishing not only

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<sup>3a</sup>December 5, 1863.

the slave-trade but also the slave system and began by suppressing both in her dominions. In 1833, the English government issued the emancipation bill for the slaves in the West Indies Islands. The government compensated the owners by paying some twenty million pounds in return. This humanitarian act was to influence the United States. The *Catholic Mirror*, however, was not convinced of England's philanthropy:

John Bull, in a wonderful fit of Philanthropy found Negro bondage to be a sin; but he could not convince New England of this fact while he held Negroes in bondage. He accordingly liberated the Negroes in the West Indies—which he could well afford to do, while he had so many untold millions of slaves whom he was working and starving to death at the same time in the East Indies. The sin is not exactly in slavery, however, according to his ethics, but in the name. Consequently he abolished the name and called upon New England to follow his magnificent example.<sup>4</sup>

Later, travellers to the British West Indies, on their return, were wont to describe the conditions as they saw them. Especially a certain "Mr. Anthony Trollope, an Englishman and a writer by profession" gave detailed descriptions in his book *The West Indies and the Spanish Main*.<sup>5</sup> The *Catholic Mirror* in an editorial, a commentary on Trollope's book, attempts to compare slavery with emancipation and quotes from the book: "The Negroes' idea of emancipation was and is emancipation, not from slavery but from work. To lie in the sun and eat bread fruit and yams is his idea of being free. Such freedom as that is not intended for man, in this world." As a comment, the *Catholic Mirror* asks: "Well, emancipation was accomplished, *cui bono*?"<sup>6</sup>

After it was certain that emancipation of the Southern slaves would become a fact, the *Catholic Mirror* adopted a new course of argument. To prove the expediency of Southern slavery, it began to describe conditions existing in large manufacturing centers, especially in the cotton factories of England and the North, where the "slaves of civilization" were kept in bondage. It must be admitted that Negro slavery was to be desired as a result of the

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<sup>4</sup>April 30, 1864.

<sup>5</sup>(London, 1860), 65 ff.

<sup>6</sup>March 5, 1864.



comparison. In an editorial of February 20, 1864, the *Catholic Mirror* forcefully describes the condition of white children in the factories "full of engines thundering with resistless power, yet under the apparent management of little children, the sight of the little creatures condemned to such a mode of life in their days of innocence" would quite overcome any observer. The study of the facts convinced the editor of the *Catholic Mirror* that slavery in the South was to be preferred to "the thrice wretched slavery of civilization" and he wrote:

The honest opponents of Negro-slavery would do well to examine further into the real facts of *life as it is*, and as it must be considered. Let them compare the overworked, whipped, half-starved and crippled *free* (!) child of Manchester with the whistling, dancing, and singing, Negro-slave boy of the South; or the wretched, sickly, crooked and stunted miner of Cornwall, with the hale, erect and good humored Southern field-hand, who takes care not to work too hard in day time to prevent his enjoying a husking, a dance, or a 'possum hunt at night. The contrasts are fair and just; and not far fetched or exceptional.<sup>7</sup>

Emancipation, when it was effected, did little to adjust the Negro to the economy implied in freedom. Many a former slave suffered because of his new status; many, even today, have not learned how to provide for themselves. The problem in Negro sociology today is primarily economic.

The climax of the situation came when the slavery question became a cause of political rancor. Northern inventions and Southern cotton, the industrial revolution in Europe, together with a changed outlook on democracy and slavery were to produce tremendous political effects in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century. About 1830, the political sentiment of America was in favor of Negro slavery in the South. Abolitionism, in the North, was at that time viewed as heresy; in the South, it was looked upon as an attack on the system that was its "peculiar institution." The pioneer Abolitionist, Garrison, for instance, was attacked by a mob in Boston because of his anti-slavery propaganda; in Illinois, Elijah Lovejoy was shot for printing Abolition pamphlets. Needless to say, such persons

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<sup>7</sup>February 20, 1864.

would have been similarly dealt with in the South where even the laws punished anyone who, by word or act, should attack the slavery system.

After 1840, the slavery question grew more serious and very soon developed political consequences that were to intensify the situation. Up to that time, new States were admitted into the Union in pairs, one free and one slave. Thus a balance always was kept between the North and South. This was to end shortly, since the remaining territory out of which the new States were to be formed, lay north of 36° 30' and, according to the Missouri Compromise, must be free.

By 1850, the extension of slavery west of the Missouri river became an absorbing question for Congress. When Western Territories asked for admission to the Union as States, grave political issues were anticipated by the party politicians. The stronger Democratic party had passed, by 1852, to the control of the Southern slave-holders, and was adopting the theory that Congress enjoyed no power to prohibit slavery in the Territories. The constant preaching of the States Rights doctrine dominated all the political discussions of the time and, as slavery was the focus point, it led to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the rendering of the Dred Scott decision, both of them victories for the South.

The control of the Democratic party by the slave-holders and the renewed slavery agitation as a result of the Dred Scott case not only threw the Northern Democrats into discord, but hastened the formation, out of the old Whigs, of a new party which came to be called Republican.

Now, the majority of Catholics were, politically, adherents of the Democratic party. The reason was, among many, because the Republican party, in its origin, was made up of anti-Catholic groups, the Abolitionists, the Native Americans, and the Know Nothings.<sup>8</sup> In the forties, the increasing foreign immigration brought with it serious political and social problems. To offset the influx of the foreigners, especially the Catholic Irish and Germans, the American Protestants formed Native American parties. These groups were begun as early as 1837; in 1850, the secret

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<sup>8</sup>Christopher Hollis, *The American Heresy*, (New York, 1930), 109.

order of the Star Spangled Banner was organized, growing within five years into a political faction called the Know Nothings. In 1854, these Nativists stirred up anti-Catholic hatred to such an extent that riots took place, growing to alarming proportions in the large cities, where Catholics lived.

The Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854, concentrated the political attention of the country on slavery again. The North opposed the bill, and anti-slavery men rushed into these secret societies regardless of the utter absence of relation between the anti-Catholic issue and the slavery controversy. "Of course the anti-Catholic outbursts had nothing to do with the Kansas-Nebraska bill; yet it was undeniable that the Know Nothings were hostile to the party that contained within its ranks the Germans and Irish."<sup>9</sup> The result was the growth of the Know Nothing party to double, triple, and finally a hundred-fold. The slavery debate frightened the North, and every faction outside the Democratic party united; in 1856, the Republican party as a result was formally established. Its primary platform was the abolition of slavery in the territories.

The concentration of dissident factions gave immediate power to the new party. Although the Republicans lost the election of 1856, nevertheless, by the splitting of the Democratic vote, they were able to elect their candidate, Abraham Lincoln, in 1860. The triumph of Lincoln was followed by the secession of eleven Southern States.

This was the political situation of the period, and the many questions involved in the slavery quarrel made both the North and South very sensitive.

What position did the Catholic press assume in this political crisis? It was again decidedly pro-Southern. The editors of the *Freeman's Journal* and *Catholic Mirror* were ardent Democrats not only because of the anti-Catholic groups within the Republican party, which they held to be "a compound organization, one section of which is of rabid abolition, while the other section only opposes the extension of slavery," but also because they felt that "the principles we have in the platform of the old Democratic party, they are all we need."<sup>10</sup> Being Democrats and pro-Southern they

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<sup>9</sup>T. C. Smith, *op. cit.*, 105.

<sup>10</sup>*Freeman's Journal*, June 14, 1862, see also, *Catholic Mirror*, December 1, 1860.

were, consequently, in favor of continuing the slave system as a political exigency.

Their approval of the Democratic party was as explicit as their denunciation of the "Black Republicans." The *Freeman's Journal* maintained that the Democratic party was a Catholic party because its principles alone were American and Catholic:

Two schools of politics are face to face. The one has a generous confidence *in the people* and is disposed to leave them as much at liberty as is possible, consistently with good order. It would leave parents to educate their children, or to employ others to instruct them, in just such religious, moral, scientific and practical ideas, as might seem best to each family for itself. In the same way, it would leave the families of each neighborhood to manage their local concerns to suit themselves, to make roads and fences, and to institute schools, and meeting houses, and churches, according to their several likenesses, each enjoying his liberty in concert with the equal liberty and peace of every other citizen. . . . Such is, undoubtedly, the ideal of the American Jeffersonian democracy. We do not say that the Democratic party has always been faithful to this idea. But we do say that it is the theory of the party, and that the Democratic party alone gives honest promise of approximating to the practice of the theory. It is, therefore, that it is the only national, the only true *American* party.

There is another party, set over against the democracy, sometimes assuming one name, sometimes another, and sometimes broken into fragmentary factions, on narrow ideas, like the "Republicans," so-called, and the "Know Nothings" or pseudo-"Americans." The essential principle of one or the other of these evanescent parties, is the enforcement upon others, through legislation, of *their* notions of right and wrong. The "Know Nothings" would force the grandsons of Revolutionary patriots to abandon the religion of their choice, or by an odious test, they would exclude them from offices in the republic. The "Republicans," on the other hand, rally under the cry of an irrepressible conflict between necessary elements of existing society in the United States and, following their crude ideas, would tear up the landmarks set by the founders of our government.<sup>11</sup>

Both editors did not hesitate to place all blame for the political turmoil on the Republicans. More than that, they continually recalled to their readers the connection of the Republican party

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<sup>11</sup>January 7, 1860.



with the Nativists, the Know Nothings, and especially the Abolitionists, as the *Freeman's Journal* states above. It was the Republican attack on the slavery institution and the methods advanced to abolish it, that called forth vehement protests. The *Catholic Mirror* makes its protest:

We enter our protest against Black Republicanism, as it is called. We considered it from the first obtrusive and hostile to our national peace and prosperity, and unfortunately, our opinion is but too clearly confirmed. We do not consider that Catholic faith is involved in anyway; and finally and conclusively, we may say that we are *not* advocates of human slavery; but that, for the common good, and even for the good of the slaves themselves, we do advocate the legal right of all States now in the Union, or to come in hereafter, to settle the question for themselves without interference from other States or from the general government. It is our earnest belief that this policy and none other, will save the Union.<sup>12</sup>

McMaster, as editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, made his sympathy for the South very evident. He was a zealous Democrat and at times passionately expressed his support for the States Rights theory. Although he was a strong defender of the Constitution he bitterly opposed the Republican theory of a strong centralized government. He wrote in the issue of June 14, 1856, a propos of the slavery question: "we have only words of unqualified condemnation for the wickedness of dragging upon the floor of Congress dangerous discussions about questions over which the Constitution gives congress no power." He warned the South, in the same editorial not to become radical in its demands but to adhere to the Constitution. The sentiment on which the Southerners must rely for strangling Abolitionism is "not any admiration at the North for the institution of Negro slavery in itself, but a *sense of justice towards real rights at the South and a love for the Union, the Constitution and the law.*"

The Catholics evidently had a great admiration for Stephen A. Douglas. It was really Douglas who began anew the slavery controversy in the 1850's; and his policies were defended by the Catholic press. In him they saw the salvation of the political predicament because, as the *Catholic Mirror* said, he had proven

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<sup>12</sup>December, 1860.

true to the North, to the South, and to the whole nation. McMaster wrote in the *Freeman's Journal*:

The strong position of Mr. Douglas is that he puts the Negro where he justly ought to be. He localizes the slavery issue; he makes it partial and special; he throws the question out of the Confederate area . . . whereas the Opposition insists that the Negro and his issue, and his question, are first and above all. They generalize and nationalize him, and legislate at him and altogether make too much of him.<sup>13</sup>

Slavery entered the political battle because the Southerners looked upon the slaves as property. The function of the State is to protect the citizens' property rights. The Constitution recognized property rights in the slaves and it consequently guaranteed to protect these rights of the Southern States. In its Abolitionistic movement, the North attacked the South on this point. Since the Constitution recognized slavery, the Republicans tried either to loosely interpret the Constitution or to change it. The South objected to both.

What the South essentially objected to was not so much the Abolition of slavery but Abolition imposed by the North on the South, which meant, to the latter, the ruin of its prestige. If any one institution of the South was subverted by external pressure from the North, all her institutions were doomed. The *Catholic Mirror* expressed this idea:

The slave-holder and the non-slave-holder have respectively under our existing constitution, liberty of conscience and liberty of action, but neither has any right of aggression. This simple reflexion is enough to keep the peace among us forever. The South has not asked the North to approve of slavery, does not ask any of her own denizens to approve of it. Every man who has travelled through the South has heard free expression of Southern sentiment in regards to slavery. It is generally spoken of as an inherited evil, not a crime, that must be borne until such time as the people can manage without violence or shock, to rid themselves of it. This sentiment may be in abeyance during the present excitement, but it exists nevertheless, and in the end, if not thwarted by outside intermeddling or violence, will do more to solve a

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<sup>13</sup>September 17, 1859.

most difficult problem, than can possibly be affected by external influences. The raving violence of the North is most injurious to all the interests and hopes of the slaves. The South will neither be driven or led in this matter; she will judge and act for herself, be the issue what it may. It is evident to us that outside pressure can do nothing for the slave, but it can and does, do much against him.<sup>14</sup>

If slavery was to be abolished without fatal destruction of the whites and all their Southern culture, it was clear that it would have to be abolished by the slave-owners themselves, voluntarily and without pressure from the North.

When the Republican party assumed political power in 1860, the Catholic papers issued warnings of coming trouble; they foresaw that a "military necessity" would be required to keep order in the country. It was for this reason that the *Catholic Mirror* said: "Yankee Abolitionists have decided that slavery is a sin. Having laid down the law, the higher law as they understand it, the next thing is to attack the sinners of the South."<sup>15</sup> The prophecy of the *Freeman's Journal* that the "Republicans rally under the cry of an irrepressible conflict" was to come true. With the election of Lincoln, the eleven Southern States seceded in 1861. This Secession was looked upon as a rebellion by the Federal government with the result that there indeed arose a "military necessity" to crush the "irrepressible conflict." What the precise cause of the Southern secession and the Civil War was, is still a question of history. There are many who say it was caused ultimately by slavery, and many who say it was not. Nevertheless, if there had been no slavery there would have been no Missouri Compromise, no Abolitionists, no Kansas disturbance, no Republican party, no Secession, no war.

The *Freeman's Journal* and *Catholic Mirror*, however, were convinced that the slavery question was the cause of the war. That is, it was caused by the unjust and fanatical agitation of the North, the Abolitionists and the Republicans.

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<sup>14</sup>December 17, 1859.

<sup>15</sup>November 17, 1860.

## FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

The canting Abolition Puritans brought on this war, on the issue that the barbarous Negro *slaves* at the South, who are incapable of being a people, or of governing themselves, had a *right* to be free, and to govern, themselves, and they, the Puritans, had the mission to see it done. "Slavery must be abolished, and you and I must do it," said the Sophomoric and false Seward, speaking for his party. But now, one of the principal generals of that party, avows that *no* people has a right to self government! It is very unlucky for all the jurists and theologians of Christendom, during a thousand years past, that they differ with General W. T. Sherman! Old things have passed away. The Revelation of God, is replaced by the revelation of table-tipping spirit-rappers. Christianity is replaced by Lincoln, Seward, Chase, and their generals.<sup>16</sup>

## CATHOLIC MIRROR

The sophists of Abolitionism assume the crime of slavery, force it out of the pale of the law, and then set judgment on it, not in virtue of the law, but in mockery of it. This is Abolition justice. They would deluge the land with the blood of the white freeman; oppress him with the heaviest burdens of taxation; desolate his family hearth; subject him to the manacles of armed despotism, and leave him unprotected by the guarantees of law, in order that the slave might go free to riot in insurrection, wallow in filth and indolence, and war on the race which has given him the only civilization he has ever reached, and with which, in the nature of things, he cannot live on terms of social and political equality. This is Abolition humanity philanthropy, and religion!<sup>17</sup>

McMaster of the *Freeman's Journal*, and the editor of the *Catholic Mirror* were convinced of the Southerner's injury, yet they continually advocated peace. In 1861, they cautioned the South to fight for her rights in the Union and under the Constitution. An editorial in the *Catholic Mirror* said: "Our sympathies are Southern, we know the South has been wronged and aggrieved, but we think it infinitely better for her to contend for her rights in the Union than to separate from it."<sup>18</sup> When Lincoln was chosen as President, and the Southern States issued an ultimatum to the North that, since they could not be assured of full rights in the

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<sup>16</sup>May 7, 1864.

<sup>17</sup>April 19, 1862.

<sup>18</sup>November 10, 1860.



Union, they would seek them outside, the Catholic papers upheld the Union and the President. They stated:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

Lincoln must be sustained. Lincoln, elected according to the Constitution, must be inaugurated, and will be entitled to the loyal support of every good citizen in the execution of the laws within the limits of the Constitution. Whoever talks of resisting his inauguration is a traitor, and if he attempts resistance, he ought to be hanged. The Constitution by which the general government and the government of South Carolina are likewise bound, makes no provision for secession on any terms.<sup>19</sup>

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

The disruption of the Union would be a great political calamity for the present and for all time. The most promising and hopeful of political institutions would be ruthlessly shivered into fragments, none of which would be a secure asylum for freedom. Our prestige as a nation would be gone forever. . . . In this region, every voice is in favor of Union, but even here, attachment to the Union is sadly stricken by the triumph of meddling fanaticism. Still, here, people are willing to forbear for a while hoping for better things, in which spirit we hope the masses in the South will eventually concur.<sup>20</sup>

These two editorials are striking examples of the attitude of the two papers: alike in some respects, but different also; no doubt it depended on their geographical influence. In 1861, when the Southern States did break their bond with the Union, the *Catholic Mirror* had little to say. It accepted the fact and confined its pages to recording the daily events, and its editorials to pleading for peace and compromise. But McMaster used the *Freeman's Journal* for his strong disapproval of the Southern secession. He wrote in the issue of April 27, 1861:

A lying spirit has persuaded the Revolutionists of the South that they might fire on our flag and even assail the capitol of the country, and yet find a divided North. They have passed the Rubicon. If we had forbearance, it was while forbearance was a virtue. They have this day to meet the stern resolve of a united North.

No one can question the loyalty of the Catholic editors to the

<sup>19</sup>November 10, 1860.

<sup>20</sup>November 17, 1860.

Union. Their editorials were written with as much patriotic sentiments as ever a Republican paper wrote. Yet, in each article it can be seen plainly that they "do not sustain a party, but vindicate an outraged country." The editors were not upholding an administration but the Government, the Constitution, and the laws. They did not hesitate to criticize Lincoln and his advisers. In fact, at times, their criticisms were so vehement and even abusive, that Orestes Brownson accused them of being un-American.<sup>21</sup> In August, 1861, the *Freeman's Journal* was suppressed for its severe tirades against the Lincoln Administration. McMaster himself, was imprisoned, on no preferred charge, in Fort Lafayette until April, 1862. This had only the effect of prejudicing him further, and on his release he attacked Lincoln with invectives that were not only abusive but undignified.<sup>22</sup>

The publishers of the *Catholic Mirror* also, in 1864, were involved in some misunderstandings with the Federal Government. It is only fair to say, however, it was not the policy of the *Catholic Mirror* or anything it had printed that was the source of the trouble; the publishers were falsely accused of possessing Southern pamphlets, called treasonable. The printing office was closed for a few days, during an investigation, thus preventing the issuance of one edition of the paper.<sup>23</sup>

The Catholic press made it clear that the Catholics, as a body, had nothing to do with the war. It is true that the Catholics, like others, were divided on the political questions of the period. It is certain that many were to be found in the ranks of the Republican party. Moreover, they fought in large numbers on each of

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<sup>21</sup>An example of the impassioned language which McMaster used, is in the editorial of August 20, 1864, when Lincoln was running for reelection: "If we are not more mistaken than has commonly happened in our forecasting political and military events, the election of next November, so far as regards Federal politics, will settle *nothing*. It is assumed that Lincoln is altogether an imbecile. It is a great mistake. He is an uneducated boor. He is brutal in all his habits, and in all his ways. He is filthy. He is obscene. He is vicious, unless it be true that he has such a lack of human qualities, as to be equally incapable of virtue and vice. But, he is an animal! . . . Abe Lincoln—passing the question as to his taint of Negro blood—was the fittest scourge Almighty God could have permitted the Yankees and diabolic influence to use. . . ." This is McMaster writing, and it cannot be paralleled in any other Catholic paper. It was *not* the reflection of the Catholic press.

<sup>22</sup>*Freeman's Journal*, May 1862, issues; also *Catholic Mirror*, September 6, 1861.

<sup>23</sup>June 4, 1864.

the sides engaged in the Civil War. The Catholic people as a whole were neutral, interested only in peace and harmony; yet when the occasion demanded, they eagerly performed their patriotic duties to both sides.<sup>24</sup>

The editor of the *Catholic Mirror* wrote:

Now that Civil War is upon us, that most dreadful affliction that can befall a State, we find among many griefs this much of consolation; to wit: that the Catholic clergy, press, and people are guiltless of bringing it on. We have heard no raving fanaticism from them, North or South. While sensation preachers and sectarian papers have been whetting the appetite of the people for discord and war, our clergy and papers, have endeavored to keep the peace, to allay hostile feelings, and throw oil upon the troubled waters. In this they have shown equal wisdom and patriotism, and they have manifested the true spirit of religion. Our clergy and press have been true to their mission.<sup>25</sup>

Very often strong denunciations against war were elicited by the papers, and frequently the editors, in a direct manner, accused the Protestant preachers of fomenting bitter feeling between the belligerent sections of the country. Charging them with false statements issued from the pulpits, of being, not religious teachers, but "knavish politicians and shallow demagogues," the *Catholic Mirror* says:

Preachers should be ever foremost to allay the passions of their people. We believe the Catholic clergy, in this respect, are universally true to their duties. Some of the Protestant clergy preach in behalf of peace, but very many of them have done all in their power to fan the flames of war. Only the other day, a popular sensation preacher in New York was urging his congregation to war in almost direct terms . . . and this bold trumpeter of war had the gratification of being applauded, while preaching such a sermon, by his auditors.<sup>26</sup>

As the war progressed and it was seen to be inevitable that the Confederacy would be overcome eventually, the question of slavery was submerged under the problems arising from the conduct of war. There are vigorous protests against the Emancipation Procla-

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<sup>24</sup>R. J. Murphy, "The Catholic Church during the Civil War Period," A. C. H. S. *Records*, Vol. XXXIX, (December, 1928).

<sup>25</sup>April 20, 1861.

<sup>26</sup>April 27, 1861.

mation, opposing it on Constitutional grounds.<sup>27</sup> Later, in 1864, there appears a series of articles on general emancipation. The papers cite the results of emancipation in the British West Indies to prove the inadequacy and inexpediency of such action.<sup>28</sup>

The slave question finally ceased to be a subject of editorial opinion. The problems of the time became the themes on which the editors write and these take the form of violent attacks on Lincoln. It may be inferred, however, that the attacks were but general protests, written in the heat and excitement of the period, and carried on by the momentum of opposition.

On Good Friday, April 14, 1865, while attending an evening performance in Ford's Theatre in Washington, Abraham Lincoln was fatally shot. The assassination forced the animosity of politics to be forgotten, and the Catholic editors, castigating the doers of the deed, admitted that, in the turmoil of the war's aftermath, Lincoln alone "was our hope of final peace." The previous attitude of the papers make the two editorials of April 22, 1865, the edition following the murder, significant:

#### FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

A fearful and ill-omened crime has been perpetrated. President Lincoln has lost his life at the hand of a private assassin. There is no argument to be held in regard to the deed. It is idle to expatiate its atrocity, or on the impossibility of finding for it palliation. For it was an act of *frenzied* madness. It was an act from which, by no hazard, could any advantage be derived—except perhaps, by the most fanatical faction of the Puritan party. To the *general* interests of the people, South and North, the prolonged life of Abraham Lincoln had assumed, within the fortnight before his assassination, a value that it lacked up to

#### CATHOLIC MIRROR

The 14th of April, 1865, is a day destined to be forever memorable in the annals of infamy. The President of the United States has fallen a victim to the ruthless assassin. In every sense of the word the event is a great national calamity. The deliberate malice of the deed, the fell audacity with which it was done, the outrage it inflicts on the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together, are scarcely paralleled in atrocity by any other similar crime recorded in history. We have reached a stage in the war in which the deliberations of the council-chamber are fraught with incalculable influence on

<sup>27</sup>*Freeman's Journal*, November 15, 1862; *Catholic Mirror*, April 19, 1862.

<sup>28</sup>*Catholic Mirror*, issues of February and March, 1864.



that period. Since General Grant performed that act of magnanimity, so much grander and more worthy of history than his bloodiest battles, the act of according to his valiant opponent terms that were the least humiliating possible; and since President Lincoln had shown the disposition to sustain General Grant, in offering to the Confederates terms they could accept without utter degradation, there was a disposition growing among wise and honest men to stand by him and support him.

the destinies of the country. Mr. Lincoln had raised himself "to the heights of the great argument," and evinced the spirit of a true statesman; the riddle of the future weal or woe of the country was being wisely unravelled, with the promise of great beneficial results, by the departed President; the hearts of men, filled with high hope of an immediate peace, beat in unison with every measure which the events of the hour demanded and received at the hands of the Executive. At such a crisis the hand of the assassin cuts down the man on whom the hopes of millions centered. Truly an appalling calamity has befallen us.

The slavery controversy in the Catholic press reached its peak with Lincoln's death. In life, Lincoln was an involuntary cause of a country being bled in a civil war; his death united the nation and settled, for all times, the controversy of a century.

## CONCLUSION

The moral principles governing human equality and human rights have not changed since the pre-Civil War days. No one today would advocate slavery under any form, since we possess a wider knowledge of the elements that make up slavery. It was for the reason that Negro servitude was a contemporary, long established, and generally recognized institution that the Catholic press was prone to defend its expediency. Moreover, the Negroes were illiterate, economically helpless, and in many other respects apparently inferior to the more fortunate members of the white race. Being close to the system, knowing it by contact, witnessing its paternal influence for good upon the Negro, the Catholic editors preferred the *de facto* institution to any other experiment in which the incapacity of the slave would be liable to exploitation. They desired a slow, gradual process of emancipation in order to prepare and educate the Negro slave to live on equal terms with the white people in American life.<sup>1</sup>

From the evidence presented, it is obvious that a section of the Catholic press was in sympathy with the South and its claims, in the national slavery controversy. On account of many contributing factors, both papers cited here as examples advocated the principles of the Democratic party, the political party of the South. Both papers were certainly protagonists of the slave system, supporting it for religious, social and economic reasons. Both papers also vehemently denounced the Abolitionists of the North and opposed their successors, the Republican party.

Many other inferences might be drawn from the foregoing evidence. It must be remembered however, that the Catholics as a body were not united on all these questions, even though there does appear to be unanimity on the slavery question. They were free to, and many did, belong to the Republican party and did oppose slavery. Large numbers fought in the armies of the North and of the South. The truth seems to be that Catholics, as a national group, in no way were arrayed as a faction and in no manner added their voice to the clamor of the times. On the con-

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. J. A. Ryan, *Questions of the Day*, (Boston, 1931), 219-221.

trary, following the policy of the Church, they desired the slow process of time to solve the problem.

Undoubtedly, the Catholic press had a potent influence on Catholics throughout the nation. It is obvious that the Catholic press, in no small way, shaped the opinion of its readers. Did it have any force in shaping the attitude of the American people at large? Evidently not. Its circulation was confined to the Catholic public; the Catholic press had no appeal for the general public. Therefore, it may be easily understood that in spite of the constant, seemingly unanimous, and moderate ideal of the Catholic journals, their editorial expressions had little influence in the slave controversy. Regardless of all this, looking back, only praise and admiration can be given the Catholic editors for their conciliatory endeavors.

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# GIOVANNI BATTISTA SARTORI

BY THOMAS F. MEEHAN

One of the notable figures in the Catholic Records of the first half of the last century was Giovanni Battista Sartori who enjoyed the distinction of being the first official representative of the United States at the court of the Pope. On June 26, 1797, he was commissioned the first Consul to represent the United States in the papal dominions. An interesting story of his career was contributed, with the title "A Roman Consul of the Nineteenth Century," to Volume XIII of RECORDS AND STUDIES. Since that was published his last surviving grandchild, Frank A. Sartori, died, in October, 1934, at Philadelphia leaving a number of family relics and papers, which were not available when the article in Volume XIII was published, and which now afford additional interesting details of Giovanni Sartori's career. For these, as well as for much of the former data, the Society is indebted to Miss Adèle Le Barbier his great granddaughter.

Among these papers is the original copy of this letter sent by Sartori to the famous patriot of the Revolution, Robert Morris:

Rome, 14th March 1797

Robert Morris, Esq.  
Sir.

As you are one of the heads of the Government of the United States of America, and the interest I feel myself for the advantages of the American affairs, I take the liberty to inform you that the trade between America and Italy has increased to a degree that for the honor of the Nation, and for the nation itself it is very necessary that the Congress of the United States should think on political affairs in this country as well as any other Nation in the world. You will observe that the Swedish, Portuguese, Polish, Russians, and many other Nations, also they have if no trade at all but very little in this Country in comparaisson of the Americans now. Notwithstanding that they have here their Ministers or Agents as to inform their Nations, on every Subject, to protect their little trade, and to assist their respective Countrymen, who are traveling through Italy. Therefore I think

that it is of the utmost necessity that the United States should appoint a Minister or Agent for the Italian affairs.

The Consuls are not much thought in all Italy—the little carakter they show is not very easy for them to enter in any treaty of Commerce or any other important affairs with the principal heads of the Governments of the Italian Powers; But they are obliged to depend by a Second hand—by this step the Government of the United States and their Citizens would be more respected and thought of by the other envious Nations who at present do not think much of them, and often they are imposed.

Should you think proper to inform the Congress about it and should you find the Gentlemen disposed for this affair I offer my best Service for this appointment in any place they would think proper. Only I must let you observe that Rome is the principal place of Italy, and where resides every Minister or Agent for the other Nations. I shall undertake this employment with great satisfaction intirely for the honor of being employed in the Americans affairs as the Country I love—the country I have refused for mine, and the Country where an Individual of her make part of myself. As who I am, and what my family is you please to enquire to John Adams, Esq. as the Senator of Rome has particular wrote to him about it. I should be extreamly happy of having to honor of some of your Commands, in this Country and with the greatest esteem and utmost respect I have the honor to be

Your Most Obedient Humble

JOHN BAPST SARTORI

You will please to make my best compliments joined with them of Mrs. Sartori to your Good Lady & family.

This letter shows that Sartori's acquaintance in March 1797, with the leading men and affairs of the time, were such as to secure attention to his suggestion, for it was followed by his appointment as United States Consul three months later as above noted. After serving in this capacity for three years he appears to have made up his mind to come to the United States, so leaving the affairs of the consulate in Rome in the hands of his brother Vincent, he came over to Philadelphia in April, 1800 and settled down to engage in business. He married here for the second time and established a residence at Trenton, New Jersey, as related in Volume XIII, and gave no immediate attention to the duties of the Consulate in Rome, in spite of formal complaints

to the Department of State at his absence and the unofficially authorized holding of it by his brother Vincent, until March 3, 1823, when Felix Cicognani was appointed his successor, all of which is duly set forth in the files of the Department of State, at Washington.

During this time he also seems to have taken on, although there are no official records of such an appointment, the status of Consul of the Pope in the United States, in spite of the incongruity of being both Consul to the Pope from the United States and Consul from the Pope to the United States at one and the same time. His formal commission as "Consul General of the ports of the United States of America, residing in Trenton" was not given him until December 16, 1828. Signed by Cardinal Galletti, the Camerlengo of the Sacred College, on that date, the document was among the family archives preserved by his venerable granddaughter, Miss Jauretche of Philadelphia, and its text was given in Volume XXI of *RECORDS AND STUDIES*. In 1832 he returned to Italy taking up his residence in Leghorn where he died in 1853.

From the family archives Miss Le Barbier has been kind enough to copy the following data which lend interest to this record of her greatgrandfather. His daughter Eugenia was married to Peter A. Hargous, son of one of Trenton's pioneer Catholics and the most intimate friend and counselor of Archbishop Hughes, for many years one of New York's leading shipping merchants. In the handwriting of Mrs. Hargous is this statement in regard to her father:

Was born 1765—John Baptist Sartori came to this country the latter part of the last century, 1793—he came in a vessel chartered by his father from Civita Vecchia and was the first vessel carrying the Roman flag that ever came to this country. He came to Trenton about 1800—settled in Bloomsbury, now South Trenton—Married and remained there until 1832—He was made Consul General of Rome to the United States of America, which office he held until he returned to Italy—he died there in Leghorn in 1853—in the 89th year of his age.

Mass was said at his house from 1806 to 1813 when the small church of St. John the Baptist was built—the priest always resided with Mr. Sartori until he left the country.



We do not know where the Catholics were buried before the purchase of the lot. The Church was called and dedicated as St. John the Baptist, but changed to St. Francis Assisi when it became in possession of the Order of St. Francis.

"This," said Miss Le Barbier, "is an old yellow paper and written on the outside is 'From Mrs. Hargous' and '1823 Pine Street'. This address in Philadelphia was where my grandmother's sister Matilda Sartori Jaureche lived. My grandmother died at our home 203 Pelham Road, New Rochelle, New York, September 20, 1895, and she is buried in Old St. Patrick's, New York. Commodore L. C. Sartori also wrote":

My mother was the daughter of Chev. Maria Gaston de Wofoin who was born in Mens near Paris, and at an early age he was sent to St. Dominigo by Louis XVI in some official capacity. I am led to believe he was the younger son of a noble family. He remained some years at a place called G——— in the Province of Hayti, married a young Creole lady, daughter of some Spanish distinguished family—acquired much property and just before the Negro Revolution on the French part of the Island. His wife died, the daughter (my mother) being then but about 3 years of age, was sent to Paris to be educated, under the Guardianship of a relative, the Duchess of Grammont—shortly after their arrival at Paris, the French Revolution breaking out and they being of noble family, had to fly from France and came to the United States and settled at Lamberton, N. Jersey, near Trenton. Shortly after her father the Chev. de Wofoin escaped the Revolution at Hayti and came to Philadelphia soon after went to South Trenton and with the little means he escaped with, purchased a fine Colonial residence from a Mr. Cox (this building now exists in fine order) where he remained several years with a son and soon found his young daughter living in Lamberton, N. J., and were reunited, after a while he thought he might (?) return to San Domingo try and regain some of his property, but by some misunderstanding among the Negro population, he and his son were accidentally shot, the daughter remaining on the property at South Trenton. Meeting Father when he later returned from Italy and in about 1806 they were married—my mother was about 17 years of age—my father purchased property on the Delaware near to Lamberton, built a fine residence and we were all born there (14 of us) my mother died early being only 42 years of age—in Feb'y, 1825 in 1832 my father owing to reverses returned to Italy with

part of the family—some married there & others in this country—and myself and sister Clem are now the only remaining of 11 who grew up to manhood and womanhood. Was related to the distinguished families of Chantrabriand & Rothfoucould & the Duke of Levis—also sprang from Gaston de Foix—Hero (?) of the time of Louis XI & Cts (?) of Burgundy—also related to Rochenbeau the General of the French contingent sent to help us in the Revolution. He was in the fleet of De Grasse at Yorktown & elsewhere ——— My mother's full name was Marie Henriette Magdalena L'Officiale De Wofoin-Sartori.

The following statement in my grandmother's handwriting is not signed:

At Sens in Champagne you may find some intelligence of our Mother's family. Her father was the youngest son and was named Chevalier Louis Basile Gaston 'Official de Wofoin. His father was married in the diocese of Sens therefore I would think the marriage certificate would be found in that diocese perhaps in the Cathedral of Sens. I saw a document in Paris in 1869 at the office of Desbrosses et frere No 9 rue Pepimise (?) it was the marriage contract of our Mother's grandfather and grandmother—her name was Dame Marguerite de Bassault (?) (Barrault ?). I cannot remember the year—it must have been somewhere in 1750 or 60. I gave Matilda Le Couteulx some papers concerning our Mother's family—she thought to ask her cousin M. Emmanuel Le Couteulx—he told her he could find a person to trace out the family—the duke of Levis was a relation.

Written on the outside of the paper is: "Relating to the Wofoin family—to be searched for in the Archives of Sens in Champagne."

By Augustus Sartori, fifth son of John B. Sartori:

My Greatgrandfather Sartorius, a native of one of the Republics of Switzerland, was a Baron and civil magistrate. My Grandfather Charles was the oldest son—he removed early to Milan from there to Rome was a trusty friend of Pope Pius VI. Name changed to Sartori by that Pontiff. My Father John B. Sartori born at Rome 1769 the oldest son (of) Charles. The younger branch of the Baron went to Spain.

My Mother Henriettade Vaufoin was of a noble but decayed family of Brittany—her father was attaché to the Court of Louis XVI but before the troubles of that King—he had embarked for St. Domingo to better his fortune, under

some (Government appointment) he then married; a son & my mother were the offspring. My mother was placed early under the guardianship of Mrs. Grammont the wife of a General. With her she went to France, from there fled to America at the time of the persecution against the nobles—then a young child—and when scarce 18 married—my Father met her in Lambertton N. Jersey and married her in 1804 her Father and Brother were killed in the insurrection of the Blacks on their Plantation—Some distant connexion of the Vaufoin's still live in Brittany who is a Prince.

One of Sartori's sons was Commodore Louis Constant Sartori of the United States Navy who retired from the service in 1873. A grandson, who was the child of Edmund was Mgr. Don Luigi Sartori, who served for a number of years as a priest of the Diocese of Baltimore. Writing in November, 1924, from Grigno, Trentino, Italy, where he was then living, to the Baltimore *Catholic Review* he said:

In May, 1873, from California I went to Baltimore and I entered St. Mary's Seminary to complete my Theological studies. During the vacations of that year I was invited to dine with the celebrated Madame Elizabeth Patterson (i.e., Princess Jerome Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon I) legally married to the Prince by the Bishop John Carroll, but by the former abandoned, because Napoleon I did not recognize her princely origin. Unable to obtain from Pius VII the desired divorce, Napoleon married Jerome to a princess of Wurtemberg making him King of Wesphalia. Enraged with Pius VII the Emperor increased his persecutions against him, but under the excommunication the tyrant was punished and ended totally ruined.

Today I am probably the only living man (I soon will be eighty-two years old) who can say that he dined, in 1873, with Madame Elizabeth Patterson (Bonaparte), a contemporary of Napoleon I, Jerome Bonaparte and the illustrious John Carroll.

Miss Elizabeth Patterson was married by Bishop Carroll in 1805 when she was seventeen years old. She was born in 1788, and consequently, when I dined with her, she was eighty-five years old and died ten years after.

Mgr. Sartori did not return to the United States and died after this date in Italy.

As indicated in the foregoing Sartori's arrival in Philadelphia in 1804 was not his first visit here. In 1794, the first year of their marriage, Mother Seton's husband, William Magee Seton, paid a visit to Philadelphia, whence he wrote to her under date of July 26, as related in Vol. I, p. 16, of *Memoir, Letters and Journal of Elizabeth Seton* by her grandson the late Archbishop Robert Seton:

I arrived here yesterday, after much fatigue from the long journey in the stage. I was quite vexed with that fellow I intrusted the letter to in New Ark (*sic*) for keeping you so long in suspense, as he told me he must pass the house. But it's over now, *et je n'y pense plus*. Your two excellent long letters have given me heartfelt satisfaction. It makes me happy to know you have passed your time so agreeably, but I am sincerely sorry for the misfortune of your friend.

I dined yesterday with my friend Sartori. His wife is a most agreeable little woman, and I was highly gratified at the many compliments passed on my *Cara Sposa*. Mrs. S. declares she must see you, and I have invited them to pass some days with us before they go to Italy, which will be in the month of September. I am sure you will be much pleased with her. I showed my friends your portrait, and many agreeable things were said, for which I felt greatly flattered, but let them know that the artist, although a Frenchman, had not at all flattered *you*.

This portrait thus mentioned is probably the beautiful miniature of Elizabeth Seton as a bride, which is among the precious relics of Mother Seton preserved at the Mount St. Vincent-on-Hudson the Motherhouse of the New York Sisters of Charity. Mother Elizabeth Boyle, Mother Seton's most intimate associate—"Dearest old partner of my cares and bearer of my burdens"—she calls her, was the first Superior of the New York Sisters of Charity. In 1794 the Setons lived at No. 7 State Street, opposite Battery Park, the house which has been occupied for many recent years by the Holy Rosary Mission.



## ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Officers and Executive Committee for the ensuing year were elected at a general meeting of the United States Catholic Historical Society, held at the Centre Club, 120 Central Park South, New York, on December 10, 1935. The president, Percy J. King, made the gratifying announcement that since the last general meeting twenty new members have been admitted into the Society, a healthy indication of the status of the organization and of the growing interest being shown by Catholic men of broader education and culture in Catholic historical research and the collection and preservation of material illustrative of the development of the Catholic Church in the United States.

In this connection members and friends of the Society were requested to send any pertinent historical books or pamphlets in their possession to the Right Rev. Monsignor Arthur J. Scanlan, St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, N. Y., or to the secretary at 346 Convent avenue, N. Y.

It was reported that the memorial volume on Old St. Peter's, issued by the Historical Society in connection with the sesqui-centennial of the first Catholic church established in New York had received widespread approval. Messages of warm commendation had come from His Eminence Cardinal Hayes, and from several other historical societies, by all of whom Mr. Ryan's monograph was declared to be a worthwhile contribution to Catholic historical literature.

The following officers were elected for the coming year:

Honorary president, His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Hayes; president, Percy J. King; vice-president, Frederic J. Fuller; corresponding secretary, the Rev. James E. Noonan, LL.D.; recording secretary, Arthur F. J. Rémy, Ph.D.; treasurer, Henry Ridder; librarian, the Right Rev. Monsignor Joseph F. Delany, D.D.

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